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# HISTORY OF LETTER-WRITING

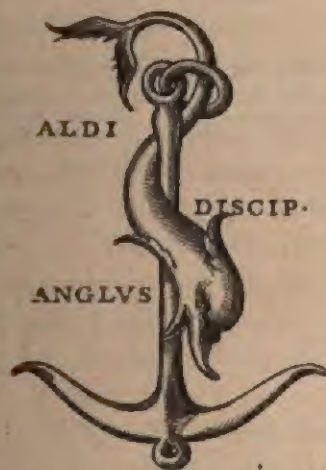
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BY WILLIAM ROBERTS ESQ.

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ΥΠΟΛΕΙΠΟΜΕΝΑ

## EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

TO

ALEXANDER RADCLYFFE SIDEBOTTOM, ESQ.

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER AT LAW.

---

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

THE practice of dedicating a book to a friend has no sensible meaning in it, but that of doing a sort of public homage to talents and character, or giving utterance and expression to feelings of personal obligation and respect. Both these motives are truly mine for inscribing this little work, which has been among the amusements of my declining age, to one with whom a long cherished connexion has matured my confidence in his candour and judgment; and in whose favour there is a large balance against me, in the commerce of kindness.

We have sometimes conversed together on the topics of this publication, so that you will not be surprised that, at length, the building, of which you saw, in a manner, the first stone laid, now presents itself to you, such as it is, a structure, if not of stately proportions, yet, it is hoped, of some solidity.

I began with no determinate design of making a book, but have gathered resolution to lay it before the public, from a growing interest in the inquiry as it has

proceeded, and a prospect of making it conduce to instruction as well as entertainment.

I cannot but think that what I have to offer on the subject under my hands, enriched by examples and specimens from histories and other sources, will present to the reader many lively traces of mental habit and character, in those distant ages, which impress us with a sentiment of tranquil delight, by the contrasts and analogies which they disclose, when brought into closer and more familiar comparison with our own times.

I would premise that I have no immediate concern with such letters as are, in truth, only treatises or disquisitions in the form of letters; though, where these bear a strong impression of character or manners, they are occasionally introduced. My chief concern is with letters as letters, where they are the channels of friendly intercourse, involving the free interchange of opinion, intelligence, or feelings; and where the correspondence is personal and special. In this view of its nature and object, epistolary composition is not only a department of polite literature, but claims the attention of the philosopher, the antiquary, and the statesman.

Thus considered, one cannot but wonder that the proper characteristics of letter-writing should have been so little the subject of early dissertation and cultivation. It was reserved for the age of Cicero to mature both its theory and its practice. It is to him we are especially indebted for the display of its uses, in calling forth a description of talent, better fitted, perhaps, for embellishing than investigating truth, and more conversant with the graces than with the severities of duty.

Although as a distinct species of writing it has been



rarely commented upon by ancient critics ; yet if the Demetrius Phalereus, who, according to Cicero (Fin. v. 19, De Offic. 11), was the auditor of Theophrastus, was the real author of the treatise *περί ἑρμηνείας*, it would appear that the general character of good letter-writing was understood, at least by some, at a very early period ; but this work upon interpretation was, in all probability, the production of a comparatively recent period. I have taken a passage from it, however, for my motto, as it is descriptive of what a letter should be.

Cicero, Seneca, and Pliny have given us incidentally some apposite and spirited remarks upon the proper style of an epistle ; and after them Philostratus, who lived under the first Severus, and died anno 244 of the Christian era, has written sensibly on the same subject ; and has named some of those who, in his judgment, have excelled most in this species of composition ; concerning whom something will be found in the course of this treatise. Libanius, who was the preceptor of the Emperor Julian, as also of Basil and Chrysostom, and Symmachus, who was raised to the consulship towards the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century, were both indefatigable letter-writers ; and the former, especially, has left us some of his opinions on the subject. The *Βιβλίον ἀδισπότον περί επισταλτικῶν χαρακτήρων*, of which many of the precepts have been preserved, does not, if it be the production of Libanius, as has been said, prove him to have cultivated with much success this field of criticism.

We have next a letter of Gregory Nazianzen to his friend Nicobulus, which contains some pertinent observations on the properties and rules of epistolary writing. From his time there is nothing that I know of, written



professedly on this species of composition till Erasmus, who himself, next to Cicero, has left us the best patterns, in the Latin language, of the epistolary style, furnished his little treatise *De Epistolis Conscribendis*, written with a dry formality of detail and distribution ill adapted to the genius of the subject.

In modern days, letter-writing has not been a copious theme with critics and commentators. Melmoth, in a note to one of Pliny's letters, has remarked, that "it is to be wondered we have so few writers in our own language who deserve to be pointed out as good letter-writers." After having named Sir William Temple, it would be difficult, he says, to add another. If his opinion be correct, the fact was the more particular, as Mr. Locke, the contemporary of Sir W. Temple, insists upon the importance of epistolary writing as a part of liberal education. "The writing of letters," says that great man, "enters so much into all the occasions of life, that no gentleman can avoid shewing himself in compositions of this kind. Occurrences will daily force him to make this use of his pen, which lays open his breeding, his sense, and his abilities to a severer examination than any oral discourse."

Dr. Johnson, in his *Rambler*, No. 152, after premising that, among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of public trusts, and during the transaction of great affairs, endeavours to account for this deficiency in the literature of our own country, by imputing it to our contempt of trifles, and our sense of the dignity of the public. He seems to think that the department of familiar letter-

writing belongs only to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity ; and that these are topics which have no right to intrude upon the employment of the busy, or even the amusements of the gay.

That as a specific branch of composition its standard is unjustly lowered by these views of its utility and importance will appear, I trust, very decidedly, to those who shall follow me through the various specimens produced in the course of this inquiry. Some of the great spirits of Greece and Rome will come forth to observation with a nearness and familiarity of approach which will shew to us, in their full dimensions, virtues which should make us ashamed of our own questionable superiority in many points of moral principle and practice, under all the advantages of a pure and perfect dispensation.

The Rambler, indeed, acknowledges, in the paper above alluded to, that though the qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments, yet we may relieve our minds from critical entanglements by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form ; and that nothing is to be refused admission which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject ;—letters are written to the great and the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the performance exacts reverence :—when the subject has no intrinsic dignity, it must necessarily

owe its attractions to artificial embellishments; and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply."

But whatever theories may be maintained respecting the uses and characteristics of letter-writing generally, experience must admit that the well furnished mind has found it, on the whole, one of the readiest ways of diffusing its communications; and that, in fact, there is scarcely a province of imagination or intelligence that has not been indebted to this medium for imparting form and colour to sentiment, and warmth and variety to the tones of natural expression.

To these recommendations of the art of letter-writing, no worse enemy has existed than affectation; which, if it often refines it into dulness, no less frequently disfigures it by an unscholarlike ease, and a rambling impertinence.

After giving all due credit to the charms of what is called ease in the epistolary style, there seems to be no reason why ease should banish grace; or why a man accustomed to write accurately and elegantly, may not carry this habit into his familiar correspondence with an accurate and elegant friend. No man's thoughts are the better for being immature; or his expressions recommended by their slovenliness; especially where this slovenliness is the fruit of dissembled pains.

I certainly so far agree with the prevailing doctrine on this subject, as to think that letters must be natural, to be good for much. It is not necessary that they should be light or sententious, sprightly or severe, rambling or methodical. Their excellence rather consists in their affecting nothing, dissembling nothing, imitating nothing;—in their fidelity to the feelings; in



their character of genuineness ; in a complexional rather than a conventional humour ; in an eloquence of expression, borrowing little from without, but sparkling and racy from the fountains of thought and sensibility. The play of a letter should be natural, its wit unconscious, and its vigour involuntary. In a real good letter there should be something vital, something in accordance with a healthy pulse of sentiment, something belonging to the interior man, as he stands affected by passing events, or his own experiences and recollections. But letter-writing has its laws ; and it is one of its laws that nothing dried or laid up for use, should find admission ; its fruit should have upon it the bloom of our youngest thoughts, and a maiden dew should be upon its leaf.

In the best letters we find a certain *naïve* and arch use of language, in which images are made to play before the fancy of the reader, without the formality of decided similitudes or figures, giving a secret but a lively flow to the current of composition. To know the mystery of these happy combinations is the talent and tact of the initiated alone. These, however, are the secrets of familiar writing, and especially of letters, as they form a part of polite literature. They defy imitation, and refuse to be transplanted. They are delicacies which will not bear handling,—felicities which seem to come of themselves, while they mark the perfection of skill.

I have troubled you with these few desultory observations on the general qualities of letter-writing, not as being suggested or exemplified by the practice of the ancients, to which this treatise is confined, but as exhibiting something like a basis on which an estimate may be founded of the comparative merits of such examples,



as have come down to us from the pens of those who once carried on a familiar intellectual intercourse, under circumstances so different from those under which we live. The task I have assigned myself is limited to the products of what is properly considered the ancient world, carried down to the termination of the Roman empire in the west. It seems like literary justice to antiquity to produce whatever tends to bring it into fair comparison with our own times, in those arts especially, in which their sober genius has supplied models, worthy of being studied by their posterity for their weight, correctness, and simplicity.

In the letters of Cicero, all that the Latin language could produce of effect and impression by its peculiar and native idiom, and the secret graces which are locked up in the nationality of its allusions and associations, was, doubtless, in full exercise; and much of this power and compass must be dormant, to us at least, at the distance at which we stand from the times in which they were written. But still the scholar who can read undelighted these productions of that extraordinary man, must allow me to doubt his capability of deriving pleasure from the most interesting of all spectacles—the full expansion of a greatly gifted mind, acting against a strong pressure from without, and with all its capacities in requisition and conflict.

To the delicacy, affluence, and idiomatic vigour of the Greek language, all who are well acquainted with it, are ready to bear testimony; but yet much of its peculiar beauty and effect must be lost to the modern reader, however conversant he may be with its general structure and combinations.

The nearest approach we can make to these inherent

and treasured properties of a language, in which its felicities principally consist, is through the medium of its epistolary specimens; and by this opinion I have been induced to enter upon an undertaking, which, as it has been a source of much amusement and interest to myself, I venture to intrude upon the public under the shelter of your greatly respected name and accreditation.

To the letters of the wisest and most accomplished heathens I have added pretty copious specimens from the fathers of the evangelical church, of the fourth and fifth centuries; in whose epistolary intercourse there will be found matter of the gravest import, and the fullest exhibition of a class of men, whose habits of thought and expression were framed after a model entirely different from that which furnished the standard of heathen morality: and the present is, perhaps, a juncture in which that portion of this work will be found especially interesting.

I have had no intention to embark in any controversy; but sometimes, in following out facts, I may have offended some patrons or professors of particular opinions on theological subjects. If such has been my misfortune, I shall soon be made sensible of my temerity by the party-wrath of critical vengeance. The whole weight of any such displeasure I shall be ready to encounter, if I am cheered and strengthened by your valuable approbation of my honesty and consistency.

In the necessary prosecution of my subject I have been carried through the comfortless regions of pagan darkness to the border illumined by the rays of the orient Gospel. Beyond that verge I have proceeded, I hope, with self-distrust and circumspection; my concern being

with facts and history, rather than with doctrine and disputation. In this Eden of our Second Adam there are divers rivers, some flowing in channels wrought by human hands, to which I have always been afraid of committing myself, not knowing where they might land me. To one only river I restrict myself, in which I am assured there is no peril ;—that full river which emanates from the fountains of inspiration, and which needs no supply from tributary streams. If I can presume to be acquainted with your sentiments, I should say they are of the same sober cast.

You will probably shrink from the perusal of so bulky a volume ; but the profession must not grudge a few vacant hours to you, who have sacrificed so many of the delights of the scholar to the duties of the lawyer.

I am, ever yours, with true affection,

WILLIAM ROBERTS.

SHALFORD, SURREY,  
January, 1843.

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## ERRATA.

- Page 19, for "βιβλιος," read "βιβλιον."  
29, for "Augustan period," read "Augustan history."  
213, l. 12 from the bottom, for "of," read "by."  
251, for "γενημα," in note, read "γεννημα."  
612, for "Officium," in the heading of the letter from Jerom, read  
"Officiosum."

There are many more errors, of greater or less importance, which the benevolent reader is requested to allow for, and correct.

# ANCIENT CORRESPONDENCE.

## CHAPTER I.

### ORIGIN AND PRIMITIVE HISTORY OF LETTER-WRITING.

In tracing the history and origin of letter-writing, we shall not look for any certain date. The honour of the invention has been given to Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus; married successively to Cambyses and Darius Hystaspes, by which latter prince she became the mother of Xerxes. The authority for this supposed fact is the testimony of Hellanicus, a general historian of the dynasties and catastrophes of ancient states, including that of the Persians, whose works are lost, and who seems to have lived till about the beginning of the Peloponnesian war.<sup>1</sup> The fact as recorded by Hellanicus is preserved by Tatian and Clemens Alexandrinus. Tatian, in his celebrated Oration against the Greeks, a work which has come down to us, contends that none of those institutions of which the Greeks were so boastful, had their origin with them, but were all invented by the Barbarians:<sup>2</sup> and, according to this author, it was said by Hellanicus, that a Persian Queen, whose name was Atossa, first composed epistles; which statement is copied by Clemens Alexandrinus.<sup>3</sup>

It answered Bentley's purpose to construe *συντάσσειν* into the sense of *εξυφέναι*, it being his object to shew that Atossa,

<sup>1</sup> Aul. Gell. xv. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Ὅτε οὐδὲν τῶν ἐπιτηδεύματων οὐκ ἑλληνικὸς καλλωπίζεται ἑλληνικόν· ἀλλὰ καὶ βαρβάρων τὴν ἐνρίαν ἐσχέας. Quod nihil eorum quibus Græci dicuntur studiorum apud ipsos natum sed omnia a Barbaris inventa sunt.

<sup>3</sup> Strom. i. 132. Πρωτὴν ἐπιστολὰς συντάξαι Ἀττῶσαν τὴν Περσῶν βασίλισσαν φησὶν Ἑλληνικός.

who, he contends, was posterior to Phalaris by two generations, was the inventress of letter-writing; but it may be reasonably doubted whether Hellanicus intended by the word *συγγραφεύς* to ascribe any thing more to Atossa than the introduction of a method of so disposing the material used for the purpose as to connect the matter of the correspondence in a regular continuity and more orderly sequence. Hellanicus, as quoted, does not use *γραφίς* or *συγγραφίς*, but *συγγραφή*, which Dodwell<sup>4</sup> thinks is answered by the Latin word "compaginare." "Hoc itaque Atossæ inventum, ut tabellas epistolares, quæ singulæ paginae appellabantur, in unum corpus et fasciculum compaginare, quo commodius a Tabellariis deportarentur, qui ab his epistolarum tabellis nomen acceperunt, prima illa docuerit Atossa."

Tatian, in conformity with his purpose, which was to take from the Greeks the credit they assumed to themselves as inventors, and to give it to other nations whom they called Barbarians, was disposed to ascribe the whole merit of inventing the communication by letters to the Persian Queen; and Clemens Alexandrinus has confirmed the statement by references to several philosophers apparently of the Peripatetic school, who, in their several books concerning inventions, have asserted the same thing. But very different views may be entertained of what properly constitutes an invention: and perhaps in a qualified sense every signal addition and improvement may deserve that appellation.

What was precisely the subject-matter of Atossa's invention we are not told, nor is anything recorded to lead to the conclusion that she was the inventress of any new material; but if she found out the way of committing the communications between persons at a distance from each other to paper, whether composed of the interior bark of trees, or of the Egyptian papyrus, or of any other flexible or membranous

<sup>4</sup> Exercitationes duæ: prima de ætate Phalaridis; Secunda de ætate Pythagoræ Philosophi. Ab Henrico Dodwello, A.M. Dublinensi, 1704, in Præf.

substance, and making it into a roll or volume, to be sent by some carrier, she may, according to the sense in which Pliny understands the word epistle, be duly accredited as the inventress of epistolary correspondence. Pliny considered as epistles those letters only which were inscribed on paper, which he places in opposition to the ancient *codicilli*,<sup>5</sup> the term he gives to the writings that Bellerophon<sup>6</sup> carried from Prius to Jobates, of which we read in the sixth book of Homer's *Iliad*.<sup>6</sup> Zenobius<sup>7</sup> and others say that Bellerophon carried epistles; but the words used by the great poet are *πιναξ πτυκτος*, with which the Latin words *tabellæ* or *pugillares* would seem rather to correspond than *litteræ* or *epistolæ*; and Pliny, while he distinguishes *pugillares* and *codicilli* from *epistolæ*, assumes, on the authority of the above passage in Homer, *pugillarum usum fuisse etiam ante Trojana tempora*. It had been said, indeed, in a history written by Lucius Mucianus, who lived in the reign of Vespasian, that, when he was governor of Lycia, he saw and read in a certain temple there an epistle from Sarpedon<sup>8</sup> written on paper; but Pliny, who quotes the passage from Mucianus, distrusts the account: "Since," says he, "even in Homer's time, and therefore, long after Sarpedon, the part of Egypt which produces paper was nothing but sea, being afterwards thrown up by the Nile."

Whether epistolary writing, properly so called, was an art existing in Homer's days, may perhaps be open to much doubt. We have nothing for it, except the story of the

<sup>5</sup> The *epistola* was always sent to the absent. *Codicilli* were given to those who were present, as well as sent to the absent, as were also the *libelli*. The messages from the emperors of Rome to the senate were called *epistolæ*, the *libelli*, being folded up in the form of a little book.

<sup>6</sup> . . . Πορὺν δ' ὄγῃ σημεῖα λίγυρα,  
Γράβας ἐν πίνακι πτυκτῷ θυμοφθορὰ πολλὰ.  
Hom. *Il.* ζ. 168.

<sup>7</sup> Zenob. p. 50.

<sup>8</sup> The name of one of the heroes who assisted Priam in the Trojan war, called by Patroclus, who, some say, was a king of Lycia.—Hom. *Iliad* xvi.



folded tablet, given by Prætus to Bellerophon<sup>tes</sup> to deliver Jobates, conveying the deadly instructions.<sup>9</sup>

The Author of the "Essay on the original Genius and Writings of Homer" seems to think that writing was altogether unknown in Homer's time. Heyne himself, and Wolf in the *Prolegomena* to his edition of Homer, are of opinion that neither the *Iliad* nor the *Odyssey* were ever reduced to writing by the Bard himself. It is, however, admitted by both of these last-mentioned critics, that writing was in use in Greece before the time of Homer; if not in ordinary intercourse, certainly for memorials and inscriptions. The probability is, that the permanent inscription of words upon paper for the purpose of epistolary communication was not

<sup>9</sup> The story is this: -Bellerophon<sup>tes</sup>, the son of Glauco<sup>s</sup>, having slain his brother, fled to Prætus, king of Argus. Here he was accused, by the wife of the king, of conduct injurious to the husband's honour, in revenge, it is said, her own slighted passion. Prætus sent him away to his father-in-law, Jobates, King of Lycia, with a letter, the purport of which was to persuade Jobates to put the offender to death. The dangerous enterprises on which he was employed, and the triumphant issue of them, are among the marvellous matters of fabulous history. We have a story of a similar kind, of Pausanias, in Thucydides, who relates of that faithless, though valiant Spartan, that he engaged a man, with whom he had been intimate, to carry letters from him to Artabazus, the Persian commander, but that this messenger, observing that those who had formerly been employed upon this errand never came back, had his suspicions awakened, and having previously possessed himself of the seal like that of Pausanias, opened the letter, and found, as he had suspected, that he was therein set down to be murdered for greater secrecy. The letter was laid before the Ephori, and afforded that complete evidence of the treason for which the general was condemned and put to death. The annals of ambition and treason have furnished several similar stories, but one of modern date is very remarkable. It is of the Italian Giangiacomo, who, having hired himself to the persons then at the head of the government of Milan, to dispatch one of their opponents of the Visconti family, after perpetrating the murder, was sent by those who plotted it with a letter to the Castellan of the castle of Monza on the lake of Como, in which he was desired to put the bearer to death. Giangiacomo, conceiving a suspicion of the contents of the letter, opened it and found what awaited him. He took his resolution. With a few trusty companions, he gained an entrance into the castle, and succeeded in getting and maintaining possession of it. He was the brother of Pope Pius the Fourth, whose name was Gianangelo, before his elevation to the papal throne.

the usage even in matters appertaining to government, and the transmission of public orders and instructions, till the time of the Empress Atossa, about which period the institution of posts, which are generally admitted to be of Persian origin, was brought into special use.

The story of Bellerophon<sup>tes</sup> may not be true; but we may safely presume that, as Homer put it into the mouth of one of his heroes without noting the occurrence as new or particular, it was a way of communication known in his time; nor is it any stretch of conjecture to suppose that persons at a distance from each other would, at a very early period, supply the want of immediate intercourse by some form of epistolary correspondence, when the occasion occurred, and a bearer that could be confided in was at hand.<sup>10</sup>

The age of Homer, taking it at a mean distance between the lowest and highest probable antiquity assigned to it by the ancient chronologers, may be regarded as preceding the Christian era by about 1000 years, synchronizing with the time of Solomon.<sup>11</sup> But the Holy Scriptures afford instances of letter-writing in some form or other at a period considerably before the days of Solomon. David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah,<sup>12</sup> and he wrote in the letter, saying, &c.; and about 140 years afterwards, Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name,<sup>13</sup> and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders, and to the nobles that were in the city, dwelling with Naboth, and she wrote in the letters, saying, &c. The king of Syria wrote a letter<sup>14</sup> to the

<sup>10</sup> "Quis enim quæso," says Dodwell, "vir prudens sententiam suam nuncium verbis effereudam credentem cum invento literarum usu, sua posset verba transmittere?" *Exercit. duæ in Prag.*

<sup>11</sup> In the opinion of Theopompus and others, Homer lived 500 years after the siege of Troy; 684 years B. C. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* l. i. s. 21. p. 389. *Origen*, S. 49. According to Plutarch, some affirmed that Homer lived at the time of the Trojan war, 1184 years B. C. *Plut. in v. Hom.* 44. So that if we take a mean between these two extremes, the age of Homer must stand at about 100 years after that of Solomon.

<sup>12</sup> 2 Sam. xi. 14, 15.

<sup>13</sup> 1 Kings, xxi. 8, 9.

<sup>14</sup> 2 Kings, v. 5, 6, 7. *ch. x* 1, 2, 6, 7.

king of Israel, and therewith sent Naaman his servant, to be cured of his leprosy: "And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes:" which transaction was about 900 years before the Christian era, and about 20 years after we are told that Jehu wrote letters, and sent them to Samaria; and a second time, other letters of a different import, which last were cruelly obeyed. We have the threatening letter of the king of Assyria to Hezekiah, set forth in the Second Book of Kings,<sup>15</sup> as also the complimentary letter from Berodach-Baladan to the same king of Judah after his sickness;<sup>16</sup> who afterwards appears himself to have written letters<sup>17</sup> to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, to summon them to Jerusalem.

Cyrus, after publishing his decree, giving liberty to the Jews to return to their own country, and rebuild the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, wrote letters recommendatory to the governors of several provinces, to assist the Jews in their undertaking, one of which Josephus has recorded as being directed to the governors of Syria, and commencing with the regular epistolary salutation: "Cyrus the king, to Sysines and Sarabasan, sendeth greeting."<sup>18</sup>

While the children of the captivity were rebuilding their temple, (522 years B. C.) there was a frequent correspondence by letters between their adversaries and Artaxerxes king of Persia.<sup>19</sup> And supposing that the invention (in any modified sense) of letter-writing on paper, or what may answer to the idea conveyed by that term, is in any measure attributable to the daughter of Cyrus, this was a transaction quite of course, and agreeable to the general practice.

Concerning the age of Phalaris, the famous tyrant of Agrigentum, very different opinions have prevailed. Bentley, as we have seen, supposes him to have died Olymp. lvii. 3, and

<sup>15</sup> 2 Kings, xix. 14.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. ch. xx. 12.

<sup>17</sup> 2 Chron. xxx. 1, 6.

<sup>18</sup> Jewish Antiq. lib. xi. c. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Ezra, iv. 8, 11, 18; see also, Nehem. ii. 8, 9; ch. vi. 17, 19. Esth. iii. 13; ch. viii. 5; ch. ix. 25. Isaiah, xxxvii. 14; ch. xxxix. 1. Jerem. xxix. 1, 25, 29.

maintains Atossa to have lived after him 70 years; which respective dates, if correct, and assuming Atossa to have been the inventress of regular correspondence by letter, afforded him an argument, on which perhaps he laid too much stress, against the reality of the letters ascribed to the tyrant, as being too early for the stage at which the art had then arrived.

The controversy respecting the genuineness of these epistles has long ago ceased to exist, having been extinguished by the dissertation of Dr. Bentley on the subject,—a performance which, in addition to the direct accomplishment of its particular purpose, has done more perhaps for the elucidation of ancient literature than any work of the same extent.

A better opportunity will occur for a few comments upon the dissertation, and upon the letters themselves. At present I shall take it as proved that the letters are supposititious; the work probably of some sophist of a school of rhetoric or grammar at Alexandria, who, at the distance of eight or nine centuries from the death of the tyrant, presumed upon the obscure traces of him preserved by history or tradition, to attach to his name the credit of a series of letters which, while they were considered by Bentley, who contended for their spuriousness, to be very childish and insipid, were thought by Sir William Temple, who received them as genuine, “to have more race and spirit, more force of wit and genius, than any others he had ever seen, either ancient or modern:” both which statements appear to be greatly overcharged; as is usually the case when facts take the different colours reflected upon them by controversy and strong party opinion.

The instances of communication by letter-writing to which I have been alluding, are plainly no specimens of that use of the invention which makes it the medium of free thought and intelligence, or even the simple vehicle of domestic intercourse. They are either formal announcements of authoritative mandates and despatches, or at best only the conveyances of certain information to be the motive to some act or under-



taking, or to determine or direct some course of proceeding. We have no examples of what can properly be called family letters before the time of Cicero, whose correspondence is be justly regarded as among the most precious remains of ancient literature which have survived to us. The numerous epistles, indeed, which have been given to us in the Greek language, as coming from the pens of persons of illustrious name in history, might be opposed to this observation, if their productions could be received as genuine; but nearly all of critical acquaintance with the subject have rejected them, or by far the greater part of them, as frauds attempted to impose upon the world with little merit for the most part in the execution, and still less of principle in the plan and purpose.

## CHAPTER II.

OF THE MECHANISM AND MATERIALS OF  
LETTER-WRITING.

IN treating of the social intercourse which is carried on by epistolary correspondence, I may perhaps be allowed to invite attention to the progress of the mechanical expedients connected with its exercise and improvement. I do not mean to trouble the reader with a dissertation on the origin of the alphabetical characters, or to enter at large into the commencement and progress of the art of writing, in its relation to the general topic of language, but to treat of it only as it is instrumentally and partially connected with the subject under consideration.

The primitive practice of planting groves and setting up heaps or pillars of stones to recall and perpetuate the memory of past events manifests, if not the total ignorance of the art of writing, at least its rude and imperfect state, and rare occurrence in the first stages of society. Numerous and various have been the practices by which the nations of early antiquity have endeavoured to preserve their traditions and memorials. Not only the expedients above alluded to, but songs, orally transmitted, and festivals and institutions of different kinds, have been made to answer the same purpose. Small cords, sometimes variously coloured and regularly knotted, have been used as registers of events and transactions by some countries, as by the Chinese in the ancient times before the reign of Fo-hi, and by the Peruvians at a later period, (known among them by the name of Quipos;) and pieces of wood numerically marked or notched have been adopted for similar ends. A nearer approach to writing was the representative method of exhibiting the things them-

selves to the eye, or using them as emblems for painting the thoughts; at which stage of the art men seemed long to have halted. The Chinese characters disclose in their formation their derivation from this source. From these imitative methods it was a great stride to the use and application of alphabetical letters; and between the hieroglyphical method, which presented a duplication of ideas and a complex association of words and objects, to the simple signification of articulate sounds by conventional signs or characters, the procedure must needs have been very slow; till at length the art emerged from the historical and representative state to the expression of sounds by the combination of visible marks, without meaning in themselves; and it is probable, that one of the intermediate steps was the syllabic method of writing, that is, the use of certain characters to express complete sounds, or what two or three letters are now employed to enunciate. With most nations the different modes above mentioned were probably long in practice together; and, after all it must be admitted, that the pictorial method has been a most expressive medium for the communication of ideas. When Cortes had his first interview with the Mexican chiefs, it may be questioned whether any words, had writing, as well as the language of their invaders been known to them, could have conveyed to their sovereign so intelligible an account of the power and intentions of their visitors, as the delineations on their white cotton cloths of ships, and horses, and artillery.<sup>1</sup> In our own days the pictorial style may be said to be in use in our heraldic bearings, which are the records of those

<sup>1</sup> Gerard Vossius, in his treatise *De Quatuor Artibus Popularibus*, after many remarks on the surprising discovery of the art of writing, a phenomenon which has lost its hold upon our admiration only by its frequency and familiarity, tells a pleasant story to shew at what an elevation it stands above the vulgar apprehension of an uncultivated mind. In the country of the Brazils, a slave was sent by his master to a nobleman, his friend, with a basket of figs as a present, accompanied with a letter. Tempted by the excellence of the fruit, the bearer of the present devoured a large part of it. The plunder was immediately detected by means of the letter, and the delinquent found it of no avail to deny the fact against the evidence of the letter, though utterly unable to

achievements by which certain families first obtained distinction.

The Hebrew alphabet retains no positive indications of a pictorial origin. In their present forms they are probably not of very ancient date. Still there seems good reason to suppose that they owe their birth to an early pictorial form from which they have gradually departed. The first letter, Aleph, signifies an ox, and the picture of the head and horns of that beast may have led to the present form of that letter. The zigzag line is a natural symbol for water, as imitative of undulation, and the letter *m*, which is called Mem, signifies water; the waving line is also the symbol of Aquarius in the zodiac. It is probable the letters of the Hebrew alphabet may have, more than those of other languages, preserved their forms, as they have been used on important occasions as notes and distinctions. The Psalms and other portions of Scripture are sometimes divided into parts, each beginning in succession with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and thus there is very high authority for the number and order of the letters, and enough to shew an early regard to their identicalness of form. The Psalms xxv. cxl. cxli. and cxlix. are instances of this order. In the cxlix. especially, each letter of the alphabet, from Aleph to Thau, inclusively, begins eight stanzas, or *stichoi*, making in all eight times twenty-two, or one hundred and twenty-six stanzas; and in the third chapter of the Lamentations, every three stanzas begin with the same letter. The pictorial origin will account for the resemblance in their primary forms between the alphabets of so many

comprehend the way in which the communication had been made. Some time after he was despatched again with some figs, and a letter to the same person. Being again overcome by the temptation, and being aware of the falling propensity of the letter, he was determined it should have no knowledge of his roguery; so putting it underneath a large stone, he sat upon it and regaled himself with his share of the figs. After this was done, he proceeded on his errand, and delivered the remainder of the figs and the letter. He was again accused, and with greater confidence than before denied the charge, till a smart chastigation convinced him that he had not escaped the scrutiny of the letter.



languages. The varieties are attributable to causes too numerous and obvious to bear or need enumeration. Accident, caprice, taste, the material written upon, the instrument used for making the strokes and marks, would be always producing changes in the form and substance of the letters, till arrested by the art of printing, which would naturally tend to identify the forms of letters, and lay the pen or the reed under greater restrictions.

The materials used in writing have been of very various sorts. In early times they were of so rude a description as necessarily to render the application of the invention very operose and wearisome. But if we wonder at the slow progress of improvement in the mechanism and apparatus of an art of such urgency in the affairs of social life, we must at the same time admire the refinement and perfection to which some of the languages of primitive antiquity were matured and polished, under such discouraging difficulties in the process of committing them to writing. The language of Homer is as graceful as it is vigorous and comprehensive; and yet in the public and private transactions which his poems record, how little occurs which supposes writing to have been in ordinary use. The story of Prætus, Jobates, and Bellerophontes, in the sixth book of the Iliad, to which I have already alluded, is the only instance in which mention is made by the great poet of the application of the art of writing; and it is observable that what Bellerophontes is represented as carrying to Jobates are by the poet called *σηματα*, which may, at least, be as well translated by "signs" or "marks," as by "written characters," unless the word *γραψας* be taken only to imply alphabetical writing, which seems to be too confined an interpretation of the word, regard being had to its primary signification. But if considering that it was a folded tablet, and contained particular instructions, we adopt the conclusion that the instrument was in writing, we feel it to be the more remarkable that such rare mention should have been made in the Iliad of an art of such great importance, amidst so many events and transactions which

seemed to furnish occasion for its use. Judicial decisions, civil compacts, stipulations and promises, rights of inheritance, obligations of kindred, conditions of combats, suspensions of active hostility, and even treaties of peace, do not appear to have been reduced to writing. Witnesses, symbols, sacrifices, and libations, were in most cases relied upon as the memorials and ratifications of the most important and solemn transactions, registered only in the consciences of the parties. All the commissions and instructions respecting the dispositions of the war appear to have been verbal; and when the appointment of the person to answer the challenge of Hector was committed to chance, the marks, and not the written names of the heroes, were cast into the helmet of Agamemnon.<sup>1</sup>

It was on hard materials that the art displayed its first efforts. According to Pliny, the Babylonians wrote their astronomical observations on bricks. Tables of stone are among the most ancient monuments of Chinese literature.<sup>2</sup> Thus also the Decalogue and Joshua's copy of the Law were on stone. Metals used for the same purpose scarcely yield to stone in antiquity. In Job, allusion is made to writing on lead with a style of iron. And plates of copper seem to have been adopted, for similar use, in times almost equally distant.<sup>3</sup> Our Saxon ancestors are said to have employed the bark of the beech tree, called *boc*, whence, some are of opinion, comes the word book. Tablets of wood, covered with wax, may be

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad*, lib. vii. v. 175 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> But it seems that the Chinese, from very early times, have had among them a manufacture of silk paper. And we read that about the middle of the seventh century, this laborious and ingenious people brought to Samarcand this manufacture. It is said that, when the Saracens took possession of that city, they brought away the art, and soon afterwards, as a substitute for silk, made use of cotton, of which paper was made at Mecca at the commencement of the eighth century. The new process followed the Saracens into Spain, and in the twelfth century a flourishing manufactory of paper was established in Valencia, where flax, an article which grew abundantly in that province, was introduced in the place of cotton, not so easy to be procured.

<sup>3</sup> *Plin.* lib. xxiv. sect. 21, and see *Ovid.* *Metam.* lib. i. v. 91, 92.

supposed to have come into adoption at a somewhat later period, and to have taken the place of materials of less easy adaptation.<sup>4</sup>

As we have mention made in Homer of a folded tablet, and in Job of writing a book ; ambiguous as those terms may be considered, there is ground, amidst much ambiguity, for conjecturing that, almost in the cradle of civilization, other materials of a more pliable and portable nature than those just above enumerated, were occasionally made use of, rude enough in their first adoption, but such as in process of time were wrought and compressed into forms more adapted to common purposes. The leaves of plants,<sup>5</sup> and the inner coating of trees, must have greatly multiplied the uses and advantages of writing, as that noble invention became progressively more and more pressed into the service of mental intercourse. The probability is, that leaves, bark, and even skins and thin pieces of metal, were all, on occasions, in use, long before they were manufactured into a condition to answer the purposes of familiar interchange. One material may be supposed to have gained a preference in comparison with others, as it happened to be improved by superior modes of preparing it. We find Themistocles writing an epistle in stone to be conveyed to the Ionians,<sup>6</sup> while tables of wood

<sup>4</sup> Plin. lib. xxxiv. sect. 21. Isidor. Orig. lib. vi. c. 12.

<sup>5</sup> That leaves were in common use, among other substances, in early ages, appears from many indications. The Cumean Sibyl is said to have written her prophecies upon leaves. Under the words *Εκφυλλοφορησαι* and *Εκφυλλοφορειν* in Suidas, we are told by him that the votes expelling a Senator from his rank and office were taken on leaves. "*Senatores nomina eorum in foliis oleæ scripta in echinos demittebant ; argumentis et rationibus latæ sententiæ simul adscriptis.*" *Αντι της ψηφου φυλλοις επισημαινε την αυτου γνωμην εκαστος, και λεγεται ταυτο εκφυλλοφορησαι.* The Hindoos appear to have made use of leaves in writing some centuries ago ; and it is said that books made of leaves are sometimes even now found in use in parts of India, and in the island of Ceylon. In the Eastern world the trees produce leaves well adapted, by their size and smoothness, for the above purpose.

<sup>6</sup> Herod. Uran. 22.

covered with wax were in familiar use, as we learn from the following story:—

When Xerxes had determined to lead his army against Greece, Demaratus, who was then at Susa, as soon as he was informed of it, was desirous of transmitting the intelligence to the Lacedemonians; but having no other means of making the communication, and being very apprehensive of discovery, made use of the following device. Taking a writing tablet (*δελτιον διπτυχον λαξων*), he scraped the wax from the surface, and wrote on the wood the intention of Xerxes; and having so done he covered the tablet again with wax. Being brought in this state to Lacedemon, that people were puzzled at first to make out what was meant by it, until a young lady, the daughter of Cleomenes, removed the perplexity, by directing them to scrape off the wax; which was accordingly done, and the writing was discovered, with the purport of which all Greece was soon made acquainted.<sup>a</sup>

As the practice proceeded, and occasions multiplied, the materials for writing would gradually assume forms more convenient and more conducive to despatch. Thus the inscription of letters on the interior bark of trees, especially of the linden tree, came to be the prevalent method, as requiring less room, and affording a better opportunity of being folded together, than materials of a grosser texture would admit of; which seems to have been the stage at which the art had arrived during the reigns of Cyrus, the Persian potentate, and his immediate successors; with whom also the method of conveying letters, by regular relays of bearers, appears to have originated.

Ælian, in his "Various Histories," relates, that when the king of Persia made a journey, it was his usage to carry with him, in order to prevent ennui (*ἵνα μὴ ἀλυσῇ*), a tablet made of the linden bark (*φιλυριον*), the work of his royal bands, and a knife to scrape and polish it.<sup>b</sup> The Note sub-

<sup>a</sup> Herod. Polyn. 239.

<sup>b</sup> Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. xiv. c. 12.

joined by the Latin translator and commentator,<sup>10</sup> is worthy of attention, who explains *φιλυριον* to mean a thin tablet, so called because it was made from the linden tree, by the Greeks called *φίλυρα*, whence came the *πινακες φιλυρινοι* *tabellæ ciliacæ*; adding, that the membrane between the exterior bark and the wood afforded a substance similar to the papyrus.<sup>11</sup>

The writing tablets composed of this inner coating of the linden, or lime tree, were rendered capable of being folded up into so small a compass as to take the name of *pugillares*, implying the capacity of being contained within the grasp of the hand or fist, and carried easily about the person for occasional use. And the convenience of this method in its improved state was such, that we find it in the palace of Imperial Rome.<sup>12</sup> It forms, indeed, a feature in an occurrence

<sup>10</sup> Perizonius.

<sup>11</sup> It would seem from many passages in the Greek and Latin classics, that these tablets were not always waxed over, but often only polished by attrition, so as to admit of letters being easily engraved or scratched upon the surface. "And for this purpose the box-wood seems to have been much used. Παλαι γὰρ ποτε πιναξίν, ἤτοι σανισί, καὶ ταύτας ἐκ πυξὸς βαλίστα, τὰ χρηρ-  
ματα ἐνέκολλαντο: καὶ τὰ γραφεῖν δι' ἀλμύρας ἐνὶ ῥυτίδας ὀνόμα: ξυσμοὶ γὰρ  
τίσιν ἐνυποῦντο στοιχεῖα, τοῦτο ξυεῖν γραφεῖν ἐλεγετο. The Note proceeds:  
"Tabellæ autem istæ etiam scalpendo et radendo poliebantur, quod iudem  
voce ξυεῖν et ξυεῖν dentabatur."

<sup>12</sup> These were light and portable cases for the Emperor's more private use. The *Serinia* were repositories of more importance. They contained as well domestic as official documents, and the duties coupled with them were of magnitude and responsibility. The *Serinia* belonging to the several functions of the palace were like the official portfolios which, in modern times, belong to the several departments of state requiring the custody of written documents; the principal Superintendent in each having the general title of *magister* or *princeps*. The principal of the *prætorium præfecture* was especially distinguished by the appellation of *Primiscrimus*, or *Primicerius*, being the person, as some have plausibly surmised, first named in the waxen tablet or catalogue of that order of functionaries. There were three *Serinia* held by officers more immediately attendant on the Emperor—"Epistolarum, libellorum, et memoriarum,"—of which it seems the one containing the letters was the most important. The contents of these several *Serinia* were daily submitted to the Emperor's approbation, correction, or subscription. Alexander Severus, according to Lampridius, after mid-day always gave his attention to the



of some importance in its latter history,—the assassination of the Emperor Commodus, which, according to Herodian, happened in the following manner.

That profligate prince, unmoved by the entreaties of those about him, and especially of his favourite concubine, Marcia, had determined to exhibit himself to the people in the character of a gladiator; and on the day in which this disgraceful scene was to be acted, he entered with his mind much irritated into his inner apartment. It was noon, and, as his custom was, he was about to take a short repose; but before he disposed himself for sleep, he took up his tablet, or writing implement (*γραφικαίον*), one of those made, says the narrator, from the linden tree, and formed into laminae of a delicate texture, capable of being turned and folded on either side, so as to lie within a small compass; and upon it he wrote the names of those whom he devoted to death on the night of the same day. The first on the fatal list was

reading and despatch of letters, when he was regularly attended by the three principal officers, “*ab epistolis, et libellis, et a memoria*,” who generally continued standing in his presence, unless they laboured under any indisposition, when they were permitted to be seated. There was also the *scriinium dispositionum*, containing orders and appointments relating to domestic and official arrangements, the head of which department was called “*Comes dispositionum*.”

But over all the various duties of the palace, there were persons especially called “*magistri (or principes) officiorum omnium*,” officers of supreme trust. In Uod. Justin. “*primates officii et priores et capita officii*”—*Aliter atque ceteri in diversis officiis nominabantur isti principes et magistri. In officio prefecturæ prætorii qui primus erat et princeps, primicerius vocabatur.*—Salmasi Not. in Vit. Galieni. In the life of the Emperor Gallienus, by Trebellius Pollus, the biographer adds: “*Quum iret in hortos nominis sui omnia palatina officia sequebantur. Ibant et præfecti, et magistri officiorum omnium. Adhibebantur et convivæ et crenationibus.*” The commentator observes, that there were those who were called simply “*magistri*” *μαγιστροί*, and whose dignity was denoted by the term *magisteria*: “*De Gallo alio magisteria ducebatur quam de hoc officiorum magistrorum, ex. g. legatus magistri militum non vocabatur magisteria, sed magisterium militum, et de aliis.*” Again: “*Per magistros officiorum intellige singulorum officiorum palatinorum principes, qui omnes suberant illi quem dixi magistrum.*” The same by the Greek expositors are called *ἡγούμενα τῶν ἐν αὐλῇ*

Marcia, whose name was followed by those of Lætus and Electus, two persons holding high offices in the palace. These succeeded a dismal catalogue of the principal men of the empire, and especially those who remained of the distinguished friends of the emperor's late father.

Having finished the writing, he laid it upon the couch, suspecting that any would enter the room. It happened however, that a little boy, a great favourite with the emperor and who used to run at liberty about the palace, entered the chamber, while the emperor, after his usual surfeit, was taking the bath, and seeing the tablet lying on the couch, he seized upon it for a plaything, and ran with it out of the apartment. By accident he met Marcia approaching the chamber. The lady, who was also much attached to the child, took him to caress him, and, perceiving the tablet in his hand, she took it from him to preserve it from injury. The handwriting the emperor was visible upon it; she read the inscription 'And is this,' she exclaimed, 'the reward of my long endurance of the indignities and contumelies of this man?' Her countenance was immediately resolved upon. Lætus and Electus were instantly communicated with; and poison having been fruitlessly administered without the desired effect, a bold desperado named Narcissus, was induced, by the promise of a large reward, to complete the tyrannicide, which he did by strangling the prince as he lay on his couch; an act easily accomplished, in the helpless state to which the miserable man was reduced by the effect of the poison and his previous excesses.

By the above recital it appears, that long after the papyrus had acquired its celebrity, and the skins of animals had been improved into parchment at the court of Pergamus, tablets made of the bark of trees, especially of the lime or linden tree, were in use among those who had the power of choosing the materials. Whether books, properly so called, were ever made of bark, has been by many doubted, and by some altogether denied. Maffei stigmatizes the notion that public documents were ever inscribed on this substance, maintaining that the bark of the tilia was only used for making the

tablets, or for mere diptycha or pocket-books, to be written on both sides, a process not practicable with the Egyptian papyrus; while others speak as positively of diplomas and other official documents being recorded on the linden bark.

Whether books can be properly said to have been ever made of this or that material, must depend upon the meaning we annex to the word book. In its extended sense, and particularly as it is used in Scripture, it may be considered as comprising all manner of written instruments, as edicts, contracts, and even epistles; and what shall we say to the Latin word for book, which so specifically associates the idea of book with that of the bark of trees? Those, therefore, who deny that books were, in their proper meaning, ever made of the bark of trees, must be thinking only of what we moderns mean by the term book. The message from Sennacherib to Hezekiah, is, in our translation, said to have been conveyed by letters; but the Hebrew word is רְשָׁמִים. In Esther, chap. x. ver. 20, "Mordecai," says our text, "wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews;" the word letters being the translation of the word סֵפֶרֶת, the sense of which the Seventy render by the Greek word βιβλίον. What particular sort of material was used on any of such ancient occasions as last referred to, is matter of very uncertain speculation.

The manufacture of Egyptian papyrus must have introduced a considerable improvement into the world of letters; soon after the date of which discovery the great libraries of Alexandria and Pergamus began their accumulations. This useful manufacture is said by Varro to have been invented shortly after the building of Alexandria, in Egypt, by the conqueror from whom the city was named, where the fabrication of it was extensively carried on. But it has been said that a manufactory of papyrus existed at Memphis three hundred years before the reign of Alexander.

The uses to which the plant has been applied have been very various; but for the particular purpose of affording paper to be written upon, the date given by Varro has probability and money to support it. It seems to have passed through

several stages of improvement, and probably continued to be of a coarse texture, till the Romans became masters of the country which produced it, who then made it the object of great care and attention.<sup>12</sup>

It was principally found on the banks of the Nile, and though it grew in considerable quantity on the margin of the Tigris and Euphrates, and other rivers, in Egypt only it appears to have been a regular staple and manufacture.

As the demands of literature increased, the supply became inadequate. We are informed that in the age of Tiberius there was such a scarcity of paper at Rome, that its use, even in contracts, was dispensed with by a decree of the senate.

Pliny the Elder, who says he saw, in the house of Pomponius Secundus, the books of the Gracchi, written with their own hands on papyrus, and that the works of Virgil and Cicero were written in the same material, has treated expressly of the Egyptian papyrus in three successive chapters of his 13th book; and some curious information may be found on the subject in a commentary on these three chapters of the Roman naturalist, by Guilandrinus, a Prussian physician; on which, however, Jos. Scaliger has passed an unsparing censure, laying to his charge numerous mistakes in relation to the text of his author.

The work of preparing paper from the papyrus is commenced by dividing, with a sharp instrument, the pellicles or filaments of the plant, which, when taken off, were extended on a plain surface, one being laid upon another transversely, or at right angles; and in this condition, being united by some glutinous substance, according to Pliny, afforded by the muddy water of the Nile, were pressed by a machine, or beaten with a mallet, into laminæ, or sheets, for the purpose intended. Others have denied that there is any gummy or adhesive quality in the mud of the Nile, and have attributed the

<sup>12</sup> The Romans used paper of various qualities, often very finely wrought and polished. The *charta dentata* was that which was made very smooth by being rubbed with the tooth of a boar or other animal. There was a famous manufactory at Rome for dressing Egyptian paper, conducted by one Fannius Plin. xiii.

adhesion of the stripes to one another to the saccharine matter of the plant itself.

Vopiscus, in his account of the upstart Emperor, Firmus, relates, that so prodigious was his property in the paper of Egypt, that he was wont to boast that he was able to support an army with his papyrus and gluten; to which passage Salmasius has subjoined a note, in which we are dazzled by his accustomed display of elaborate research. In opposition to the opinion of those who considered the Pretender's boast to imply only that he could maintain an army with the price of his paper, Salmasius contends for the literal import of the words used, and understands his author to mean that the two substances of which the paper in his possession was composed, was sufficient to supply aliment for an entire army. Papyrus is well known to be of an esculent quality, and to have been sometimes eaten by the Egyptians, who have been called *παραπυραγοι*, papyrus eaters.<sup>14</sup> The gluten also which was used in the manufacture, was of a nutritious nature, being composed of fine flour or mill-dust made into a paste with boil-

<sup>14</sup> The traveller, Dr. Clarke, makes mention of a sort of flag, the *typha palustris*, flourishing most luxuriantly in the shallows of the river Don. "We found," he says, "the inhabitants of Oxai, and afterwards of Tschirchaskoy, detaching this plant raw, with a degree of avidity as though it had been a delicious observance. It was to be seen in all the streets, and in every house, bound into faggots, about three feet in length, as we tie up asparagus, which were hawked about or sold in the shops. They peel off the outer rind, and find near the root a tender white part of the stem, which, for about the length of seven inches, affords a crisp, cooling, and very pleasant article of food. We ate of it heartily, and were as fond of it as the Cossacks, with whom, young or old, rich or poor, it is a most favourite repast. The taste is somewhat watery, but in hot climates, so cool and pleasant a vegetable would be everywhere esteemed. The Cossack officers, however, who had been in other countries, assured us that they found this plant fit for food only in the marshes of the Don."

In another place the same traveller observes that in almost all its characteristics the Don bears resemblance to the Nile. "It has the same regular annual inundation, covering a great extent of territory, over which we now passed by water to Tschirchaskoy, although the land is dry by the months of July or August. The same aquatic plants are found in both rivers, and in particular the same tall flags, reeds, and bulrushes, sometimes rising to the height of twenty feet."



ing water, with the addition of a small quantity of vinegar; or, of what was preferred for this purpose, fermented bread in boiling water, strained through a colander. Of this gluten and papyrus the Egyptian paper was composed. But in Egypt itself the turbid water of the Nile is said to have been chiefly used, which afforded, when drained, a glutinous substance of a sufficient consistence for the purpose intended. At Rome, where the manufacture was prepared with particular care, a gluten was made of superior properties to the mud of the Nile; and in the days of Firmus the gluten used in Rome was adopted in Egypt, and thus that purpled adventurer came to say, in his boastful language, that he could with his property in paper maintain an army.

Salmasius, borrowing from Pliny, describes the process. The papyrus was divided by a needle into the thinnest possible stripes, the thinnest being the best suited to the purpose. The ends being then cut off, these stripes were laid lengthways in a frame, parallel and close together, and wetted with the water of the Nile. These stripes so disposed, like the warp in the loom, were laid horizontally; and upon these other layers were placed transversely, and in the same parallel close order, at right angles with those first laid in the frame, like the woof, or cross threads, of the weaver's yarn; the first sheet, or sheet of connected stripes, being called by Pliny the statumen, or statumen, and the transverse layers, or pellicles, the subtemen.\* Thus Lucan:

*Nondum flumineas Memphis contexere biblos  
Noverat.*

The difference between the loom process and the paper making from the papyrus was only this: In the manufacture of the paper the transverse layers, answering to the subtemen, or woof, of the weaver, were simply laid across the statumen, or warp, with which it was connected by the help of the gluten; whereas in the loom the transverse threads were carried by

\* See Plin. l. xiii. c. 12

the shuttle under and over the direct threads of the warp or web in regular alternation. The next process was to put the two sheets of papyrus thus connected together by the gluten into a press; from which they were afterwards taken and dried in the sun. When these were in this manner sufficiently dried, they were put together in one roll, or volume, being first joined by some adhesive matter, and thus made to compose what in Pliny is termed the scapus, from the Greek σκηπος, dorice σκάπος, a rod, or stem, of columnal or cylindrical shape: in the same sense as the word κανων is frequently employed, which was a straight round rod, or rule. Hesychius: κανων, το ξυλον περι ο θ μτος, &c.; and Suidas: κανονιον οντο καλειται η οιαδηποτε πραγματια, καν πλειονων τυγχανη στοιχιων, η στιχων, η παγινων.

Of what number of sheets the quire or roll of the papyrus consisted at different periods, whether ten or twenty, seems not to be a point of much importance; but some things relating to the fascies or parcels of the papyrus so united together, deserve our notice. It seems that the written papyrus was made up into similar rolls; but the scapus, or σκηπος, more properly applied to the roll of paper before it was written upon, and tomos, or volumen, to the written rolls or books. By *achedæ* were often meant single sheets torn off the scapi to receive what was hastily committed to it, to be afterwards entered or written out more fairly. In this detached form they reserved the *extemporalia scripta et nondum emendata*, which were written sometimes on the back of the sheet, and then had the name of *opistographa*, sometimes on the front or first page, and were then called *adversaria*. "In *opistographis et adversariis rationes et diurna sua perscribebant, quibus utramque chartæ paginam occupabant, adversam et aversam, ab adversa dicta adversaria, ab aversa opistographa.*" Thus Lucian, in his dialogue *Βίων πρασις*, says, that the satchel of the Cynics was stuffed with pulse and opistgraphal papers, in which they entered, as they occurred, their philosophical memorandums: "φιλοσοφηματα, scilicet quædam de secta sua incondite et tumultuarie scripta." But whatever was written fairly out to be

kept and preserved, was usually written on the front, not on the back of the sheet, or *scheda*, so that when the books of the papyrus were unrolled, the writing was all seen on the interior and not on the exterior side of the paper; and in this respect the papyrus books differed from the books composed of membranes, or skins, which, on account of the substance of that material, were written on both sides, the sheets being generally laid one upon another, as in our modern books, and called *tabellæ*, those of the papyrus books being called *paginae*. The pugillares, or small hand-books, were made up also of skins called *tabellæ* by the Latins, and *πτυχια* by the Greeks. The small manuals, or memorandum books, called pugillares were made in the same way, being convenient for journals and short entries. The Latins had their *duplices*, *triplices*, &c., and the Greeks their *διπτυχα* and their *πολυπτυχα*.

Where the leaves of these books were composed of the inner rind or laminæ of the bark of trees, they were often thinly waxed over; making the pugillares *deletitii*, which, like our pocket-books, were carried about the person for notes and memorandums, to be effaced at will.

In the rolls or volumes of papyrus, the sheets or leaves were glued to each other at the edges, and carried out in successive lengths, the first sheet or *scheda* (on which was usually nothing but the manufacturer's mark, and the title of the book) being first fastened or glued, and called on that account the *πρωτοκολλον*, whence comes the word *protocol* in such frequent diplomatic use. The same term also denoted the *prima scheda* of the books composed of membranous leaves, whether of skin or bark. In respect of the quality of the papyrus, it is observable that the excision being begun at the middle of the plant, the first pellicle or stripe was the finest and best; the second the next in goodness, and so on to the outside of the plant; the last being the coarsest, and fit only for the commonest purposes. The paper made of the stripes nearest to the middle being the thinnest and finest, was distinguished from the time of Augustus Imp. to that of Claudius Imp. by the name of *Augustæ* and that which was made of the second

stripe from the middle was denominated *Livia*, from the wife of Augustus. But the paper called *Augusta* was so fine and often to be penetrated by the reed or Roman pen, especially by those which were brought to a fine point (*temperati calami*), and sometimes to shew the writing through the paper: to remedy which defects the Emperor Claudius caused to be made a mixed paper, composed of the first and second stripe of the plant; the latter being used for the statumen, or what answered to the warp or web, and the finer sort, or that which was taken nearest the middle, being put in the place of the subtemen or transverse stripes; thus together producing a paper of sufficient delicacy for appearance, and sufficient substance to resist the calamus or pen, and to prevent the letters from being visible through the paper.

There are accounts also of a paper made in Madagascar, from the papyrus growing in that country, which is manufactured by putting the leaves into a mortar, beating them to a paste, washing this paste with clear water on a frame of bamboos, expanding them into sheets, and lastly glazing the surface with a decoction of rice water.

The Egyptians also wrote on linen cloth, in periods very remote, specimens of which are often found with their mummies. A considerable number of MSS. written on papyrus have been found in Herculaneum; and a process, under the patronage of the English court, has been long in operation to unfold them. The sheets are joined together, forming rolls, on which the characters, where the parts can be separated, can be easily read. But from the want of stops the sense is often difficult to be made out. Herculaneum was overwhelmed by the lava and burning ashes of the volcano, and of course the MSS. are in general half burned; and many are so united by the baked vegetable juice as to be impossible to be unfolded. The MSS. which were discovered at Pompeii, crumbled to powder when touched; and some immediately upon their exposure to the air. The whole of Herculaneum lay so deep below the surface, and was so buried under ashes and lava, that the process of excavation has been attended with

the greatest difficulty. One room only was found not entirely choked, where, in some presses and compartment, MSS. of the number of 1756 have been discovered; all, it seems, of the paper of papyrus. The use of goldbeaters' skin, in imparting a sort of substance to the paper, by being applied to the back, has of late years aided much the process of unrolling. Out of the entire number, about 210 are said to have been successfully laid open.

Monfaucon considered the cotton paper to have been familiar in Europe for six or seven hundred years before his time; and it is known with certainty to have been in common use in the Western world from the tenth century. It had the name of *charta bombycina*; and Dr. Prideaux is of opinion that it was brought into Europe from the East. Some manuscripts in Arabic and other Oriental languages, of a very ancient date, are written on paper appearing to have been made of silk, linen, or cotton, intermixed.<sup>15</sup> Linen manuscripts are sometimes found in the Egyptian mummy cases. There are MSS. on cotton paper of the tenth century in the Royal Library of Paris; and from the twelfth century they are as common as those on vellum or parchment.

The patronage of literature by the kings of Pergamus which began about the middle of the third century before the Christian era, in the reign of Eumenes, put invention to the stretch to discover a substitute for the Egyptian papyrus which, from envy or other motives, was about this time forbidden to be carried out of the country which produced it. The improvement produced by these efforts appeared in the elaboration of the skins of beasts into parchment and vellum of which the origin stands recorded in the name of *pergamenum*. Of the leaves of vellum, or parchment, books of two descriptions were made; one in the form of rolls composed of many leaves, sewed or glued together at the end. These were written on one side only, and required to be unrolled before they could be read. The other kind was like our present books

<sup>15</sup> Prideaux, *Conn.* P. I. B. 7.



made of many leaves fastened to one another. They were written on both sides, and were opened like modern books. The improvement of this useful and convenient fabric could not fail to recommend it to general adoption wherever the purchase of it could be afforded, and particularly where any subject of importance was to be committed to writing. There were advantages, however, in the papyrus, which kept it in extensive use, till the better and more substantial paper made of cotton, equally flexible, compressible, and durable, was invented: a discovery known in the western world (say some writers) as early as the fifth century.

The pergamenum kept its place amongst the latest improvements in the substances applicable to the art of writing; and, indeed, its competency to resist ordinary accidents, its capacity of being rolled into a volume, and the hardness of its surface, making the ink shew itself upon it almost in relief, will probably secure for it a preference, where the above qualities are important. After the introduction of paper made of cotton, it is probable the papyrus was little used in Europe. It naturally gave place to the more substantial substitute; besides which its diffusion was much impeded by the subjugation of Egypt to the dominion of the Saracens, so that there are few, if any, manuscripts on the papyrus posterior to the eighth century.

The great invention of the manufacture of paper from linen rags has not been traced with any certainty to its origin. There are no distinct vestiges of its adoption among us before the fourteenth century. Some have given the honour of the invention to the Arabians; an opinion which seems, however, to have little to support it. There appears to be better reason for assigning to the Chinese the credit of the discovery; but it has been claimed by every nation of the civilised world. One thing is clear,—that it is a discovery which has wonderfully increased the commerce of intelligence, and the amount of moral good and evil of which the intellect of man is capable. To it we may attribute the discontinuance of the practice of erasing from books the classical remains of antiquity, to make room for the legends and chronicles of monkish invention.

## CHAPTER III.

## OF PENS, PENCILS, AND INK.

THE style, used by the ancients, was an instrument made of wood, metal, and other materials, pointed at one end, and blunt at the other; with the sharp end they wrote upon their tablets, covered with a sort of wax, using the obtuse end to obliterate the writing, or any part of it, when necessary. But when they wrote upon parchment, or papyrus, they made use of a reed, dipped in some staining or colouring liquor. Baruch is said, in the thirty-sixth chapter of Jeremiah, to have written his prophecies with ink, which is probably the earliest mention of this method of writing to which we can refer; though there is reason for supposing that the use of the reed<sup>1</sup> dipped in some marking liquor, existed in very ancient times in China, and other parts of the East.<sup>2</sup> It is the instrument at this day used in writing by the Turks, Persians, and Arabians.

The Indian, or, more properly, the Chinese ink, needs only to be slightly rubbed in water to afford a substance rather solid than fluid, well adapted to the purpose of writing.<sup>3</sup> Ink-

<sup>1</sup> Du Hald. Descr. Chin. vol. i. p. 363. Phil. Trans. No. cccxvii. p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Called by the Romans stylus or graphium.

<sup>3</sup> In the work on the Empire of China and its Inhabitants, by John Francis Davis, Esq., late his Majesty's Chief Superintendent in China, 1836, will be found the following information on this subject:

"The date of the invention of paper seems to prove that some of the most important arts connected with the progress of civilization, are not extremely ancient in China. In the time of Confucius they wrote on finely-pared bark of the bamboo with a style. They next used silk and linen. It was not until A.D. 95, that paper was invented. The materials which they use in the manufacture are various. A coarse yellowish paper, used for wrapping parcels, is made from rice straw. The better kinds are composed of the liber or inner

sands, with pens (reeds) lying by them, are represented in pictures found in Herculaneum. Those reeds were dipped in some liquid substance, various in its composition and colour, but for the most part black, and expressed by the word *atramentum* in Latin. It sometimes had the name of *cœpia* among the Latins, which signified the black or dark liquor emitted by the cuttle-fish. In Greek it had the general name of *γραφικόν μελαν*. St. John, in his Third Epistle, says, he did not intend to write with pen (reed) and ink. Allusions also to this mode of writing occur in most of the authors of the Augustan period, and their literary successors.

bark of a species of the *morus*, as well as of cotton, but principally of the bamboo; and we may extract the description of the last from the Chinese Repository, vol. iii. p. 265:—"The stalks are cut near the ground, and then sorted into parcels according to the age, and tied up in small bundles. The younger the bamboo, the better is the quality of the paper which is made from it. The bundles are thrown into a reservoir of mud and water, and buried in the ooze for about a fortnight to soften them. They are then taken out, and cut into pieces of a proper length, and put into mortars with a little water, to be pounded to a pulp with large wooden pestles. This semi-fluid mass, after being cleansed of the coarsest parts, is transferred to a great tub of water, and seditions of the substance are made until the whole becomes of a sufficient consistence to form paper. Then a workman takes up a sheet with a mould of proper dimensions, which is constructed of bamboo in small strips made smooth and round like wire. The pulp is continually agitated by other hands, while one is taking up the sheets, which are then laid upon smooth tables to dry. This paper is unfit for writing on with liquid ink, and is of a yellowish colour. The Chinese size it by dipping the sheets into a solution of fish glue and alum, either during or after the first process of making it. The sheets are usually three feet and a half in length, and two in breadth. The fine paper used for letters is polished, after sizing, by rubbing it with smooth stones."

"What is commonly known in this country under the name of Indian ink, is nothing more than what the Chinese manufacture for their own writing. The writing apparatus consists of a square of their ink; a little black slab of schistus, or slate, found in the mountains called *Leu-shün*, on the west side of the Poyang lake, (where the last embassy saw quantities of these slabs manufactured for sale,) polished smooth, with a depression at one end to hold water; a small brush, or pencil of rabbits' hair, inserted into a reed handle; and a bundle of paper.

"The Chinese, or, as it is miscalled, Indian ink, has been erroneously supposed to consist of the secretion of a species of *sepiæ* or cuttle-fish. It is,

Sometimes, in order to make the writing more visible where the person addressed laboured under an infirmity of eye-sight, the letter was written with black ink (*atramento*) upon ivory; and these epistles were called *pugillares eborei*.<sup>\*</sup> Thus the Roman epigrammatist:

*Languida ne tristes obscurant lumina cera,  
Nigra tibi niveum littera pingat ebur.*

Mart. lib. xiv. Ep. 5.

The Romans found it generally convenient, in composing, to

manufactured from lamp-black and gluten, with the addition of a little musk to give it a more agreeable odour. A black dye is also obtained from the cup of the acorn, which abounds in gallic acid. Pere Contancin gave the following as a process for making the ink: A number of lighted wicks are put into a vessel full of oil; over this is hung a dome or funnel-shaped cover of iron, at such a distance as to receive the smoke. Being well coated with lamp-black, this is brushed off and collected upon paper. It is then well mixed in a mortar with a solution of gum or gluten, and when reduced to the consistence of a paste, it is put into little moulds, where it receives those shapes and impressions with which it comes into this country. It is occasionally manufactured into a great variety of forms and sizes, and stamped with ornamental devices, either plain or in gold and various colours.

"They consider that the best ink is produced from the burning of particular oils, but the commoner and cheaper kinds are obtained, it is said, from fir wood. The best ink is produced at Hoey-chow-foo, not far from Nanking; and a certain quantity annually made for the use of the emperor and the court, is called *Koong-mé*, 'tribute ink.' The best ink is that which is the most intensely black, and most free from grittiness."

In the Hindûlaya provinces there is a plant found in great abundance, called *Sitabharua*, from which a coarse paper is made, by first detaching the bark of the stem and branches, and then submitting the same to the process of boiling, pounding it into a paste, straining it through a cloth to get rid of the coarser fibres, drying it in the sun, and finally spreading it upon a cotton cloth stretched upon a frame; and this has probably been practised for centuries. The fabric is coarse, but capable of great improvement. See the description of the plant *Daphne Cannavina* by Dr. Wallich, *Asiatic Researches*, vol. xiii. and of the mode of making paper from it in *Journ. of the Asiatic Society*, vol. i. p. 8.

Paper is said to be manufactured in Kashmere, in considerable quantities, from old cloth of the Jân-hemp, and from cotton rags. See *Travels of Moorcroft and Trebeck*, from 1819 to 1825. Murray.

<sup>\*</sup> *Arundo*, *fistula*, and *canna*, split at the point.

write their thoughts first upon waxen tables, for the facility of making alterations or corrections; and perhaps also for expedition, as they had no occasion to leave off for dipping the pen; and when the draft was thus made correct, it was transcribed upon paper or parchment. They had also a blotting paper, of a coarse contexture, which they called *charta deletoria*, and which had also the Greek name of *παλιμψεστος*, from *παλιν*, rursus, and *ψαω*, rado, from which what was written upon it might be easily rubbed out, or erased.<sup>5</sup> The better sort usually carried about them their pugillares, or small writing tables, on which they set down any thing which occurred. Thus Pliny, in his agreeable letter to his friend Tacitus, tells him that he took care to have about him, even when hunting, his *stylus et pugillares*, "*ut si manus vacuas, plenus tamen ceras reportarem.*"<sup>6</sup> As the Romans wore neither sword nor dagger when in the city, they sometimes had recourse to the iron style which they thus carried about their persons, as a weapon of defence: accordingly we read in Suetonius, that Julius Cæsar, when assaulted by the conspirators, upon receiving his first wound, pierced the arm of the assassin with his stylus, or graphium. Quintus Antyllus, one of the lictors of the consul Opimius, who offended the followers of Caius Gracchus, in the forum of Rome, by his pushing them aside with contempt, as they were supporting their friend, was fallen upon by them in the fury of their resentment, and slain with their styles, or writing instruments.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Cic. Fam. lib. vii.* Cicero to Trebatius.

<sup>6</sup> *Plin. lib. i. Ep. 6.*

<sup>7</sup> *Florus, l. iii. c. 15.* The friends of Caius Gracchus and Fulvius were greatly exasperated by his rejection, on his standing for the tribuneship the third time. His disappointment was followed by the elevation of his great enemy, L. Opimius, to the consulship, who exerted the whole power of his office to procure the repeal of Caius's popular laws. Caius, it is said, at the instigation of Fulvius, the triumvir, collected his friends, to defeat the consul's measures. On the day for proposing the abrogation of the laws in question, both parties repaired early in the morning to the capitol. While the consul was performing the customary sacrifices, Q. Antyllus, one of his lictors, while carrying away the entrails of the victims, said to the friends of Caius and Ful-



Seneca, in his tract on Clemency, makes mention of a Roman knight, who having whipped his son to death, was himself put to death by the people in the forum, who stabbed him with their styles. "*Populus in foro graphiis confodit.*"<sup>8</sup> From which occasional use of this instrument, it is probable that the word *stiletto* in the modern language of Rome had its origin.

The case for holding the implements of writing was called by the Romans *scrinium*, or *capsa*,<sup>9</sup> and by the Greeks *κιβωτός* or *κιβώτιον*; a very essential part of the furniture or equipment of a person of any rank or importance in the more polished nations of antiquity.

The use of black lead pencils, both for writing and drawing, is of old standing, though hardly, if at all, traceable to the times of Greek and Roman antiquity. There is, indeed, a hint of it in the works of Pliny, where we have the words *argento, ære, plumbo, lineæ ducuntur*.<sup>10</sup> But the passage seems to signify nothing more than the use of these substances in making lines by the help of the rule. This application of these materials, and especially of lead, as being soft and easily rubbed out, appears to have been in practice many centuries ago. We know that above a thousand years ago transcribers made their writings even and regular by means of parallel lines, to be erased after having answered their purpose. In very old MSS. the traces of those lines are very visible; but, according to Beckman, this practice became rare after the fifteenth century, about which period the MSS. exhibit a want of the parallelism which is characteristic of the more ancient specimens.

The use of lead pencils in writing has an early date in modern history. Gesner, in his book on Fossils, printed at

vius, "Make way, ye worthless citizens, for honest men." And it is added, that he accompanied these words with a contemptuous motion of his hand, whereupon they fell upon him and killed him with their styles or pens of their tables.

<sup>8</sup> Seneca, de Clement. lib. i. cap. 14.

<sup>9</sup> Horat. Sat. lib. i. Sat. 4. lin. 22.

<sup>10</sup> Plin. lib. xxxiii. p. 136.

Zanch in 1565, says, that pencils for writing were used in his day, with wooden handles and pieces of lead, or, as he rather believed, an artificial composition, called by some *summi anglicanum*.<sup>11</sup> Towards the end of the same century, Imperati mentions the *graffio piombino*, and says it was more convenient for drawing than pen and ink. The mineral, he says, was smooth, greasy to the touch, had a leaden colour, and a sort of metallic brightness. One kind was mixed with a clay, which they called *rubrica*.<sup>12</sup> But the pencils principally in use in Italy, at the period of the revival of letters, were composed of lead and tin, the proportion being two parts of the former to one of the latter; which pencil was called a *style*. It seems that the oldest certain account of the use of quills in writing, which has reached us, occurs in a passage in Isidorus Hispalensis, who died in 636. He mentions reeds and feathers, as instruments employed in writing. There is, besides, a small Latin poem on a writing pen, to be seen in the works of Anthelmus; the first Saxon, says Beckman, who wrote Latin, and who made the art of Latin poetry known to his countrymen. He is said also to have inspired them with some taste for compositions of this kind. He died in 709. The poem, *De Penna Scriptoria*, begins thus :

*Me pridem genuit candens onocrotalus albam,*

which, if not descriptive of a goose-quill, at least supposes an implement furnished by a feathered animal. Writing pens are mentioned by Alcuin, who lived in the eighth century, somewhat later than Anthelmus, and composed poetical inscriptions for every part of a monastery, and among others for the writing study; of which he says, that no one ought to talk in it, as it was very important that the pen of the transcriber should go correctly on without mistake.

*Tramite quo recto penna volantis eat.*

Mabillon saw a MS. of the Gospel written in the ninth

<sup>11</sup> *De Rerum Fossilium Figuris*, p. 104.

<sup>12</sup> *Del Historia Naturale di Ferrante Imperato*. In Napoli, 1599, p. 122.

century, in which the Evangelists were represented with quills in their hands. In the curious little work of Henricus Ackerus, called "*Historia Pennarum*," in which he treats of the pens of the famous Academicians, published at Altenburgh in 1726, we read of the *one pen* of Leo Allatius, with which he wrote his Greek for forty years, and on losing which he is said to have with difficulty refrained from tears. "*Et tandem amisso tantum non lacrymasse.*" P. Holland, the translator of Pliny, performed his work with a single pen, and he has handed down the fact in the following verse:

*With one sole pen I wrote this book,  
Made of a grey goose-quill:  
A pen it was when I it took,  
A pen I leave it still.*

Cicero, in a letter to his brother Quintus, makes some pleasant allusions to his bad pen;<sup>44</sup> in which he tells him that he is apt to snatch up whatever pen (*calamus*) comes first to hand.

<sup>44</sup> Ad Quint. Frat. lib. ii. ep. xv. "*Calamo et atramento temperato, charta etiam dentata res ageatur. Scribis enim te meas litteras superiores vix legere potuisse: in quo nihil eorum, mi frater, fuit, quæ putas. Neque enim occupatus eram, neque perturbatus, nec iratus alicui: sed hoc facio semper, ut, quicumque calamus in manus meas venerit, eo sic utar tamquam bono.*"

## CHAPTER IV.

## OF THE FORMS OF ANCIENT LETTERS.

In the more early as well as the classic ages of antiquity letters were made for delivery much in the same way as were their books,—generally in rolls; and when paper and parchment came into use, with a wrapper of the coarser kinds of these materials, on which the name or address of the person written to was sometimes inscribed. In Cicero's time, a letter, if long, was divided into pages; and it seems that Julius Cæsar was accustomed to send his letters to the senate in a sort of book distinctly paged, and folded together, differing, in this respect, from former generals, who, when they wrote to the senate, carried the line along the sheet, without any division or paging. In this practice he was followed by succeeding emperors. These epistles on public business were sometimes called *libelli*,<sup>1</sup> and sometimes *codicilli*; *litteræ* being the word generally in use to signify familiar letters. Thus Cicero to Lepta: "Accepi a Seleuco tuo litteras; statim quæsi a Balbo per codicillos, quid esset in lege," &c.<sup>2</sup>

The Romans sealed their letters usually with some device or symbol, to notify the writer, and identify the person written to. In the *Pseudolus* of Plautus, the bearer thus accosts the person to whom he brings the letter:

*Nosce imaginem; tute ejus nomen memorato mihi,  
Ut sciam te Ballionem esse ipsum.*<sup>3</sup>

The wax, with the impression, kept the letter closed, and hence

<sup>1</sup> "Sed jam supplicibus dominum lassare libellis," Mart. lib. viii. ep. xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. ad. Fam. lib. vi. ep. xviii, and see Tacit. Ann. lib. xvi. c. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Plaut. Pseud. Act. ii. Scen. ii. v. 20; Id. Bacch. Act. iv. Scen. 6. v. 19.

the phrase, *Solvere Epistolam* : and as the impression or signum was generally defaced or broken in opening the letters, the messenger or bearer usually required the person to whom it was to be delivered to acknowledge the signum,<sup>4</sup> and name the writer, that it might with the more certainty appear that he was the person to whom the letter belonged. Thus Cicero, in his third oration against Catiline: "*Ostendi tabellas Lentulo, et quæsi cognosceretne signum.*"

Augustus Cæsar at first adopted a sphinx for the device of his seal, both in his public acts and in his epistles; afterwards the figure of Alexander the Great; and ultimately his own likeness, engraved by Dioscorides; which impression his successors continued to use; and we are informed by his accurate biographer, that he was so precise in dating his letters, that he added the hour of the day or night in which they were written.<sup>5</sup>

It was not unusual with the great men among the Romans to use one of the alphabetical characters in the place of the other, where it was their design to convey certain intelligence or orders to be understood only by the person written to; the transposition having been previously concerted. Upon these occasions Julius Cæsar, instead of the proper letter, made use of the letter that came fourthly after it in the alphabetical order; as D for A, and so on. And Augustus used the letter immediately following the letter which should properly have been used.<sup>6</sup>

In writing letters it was customary with the Romans to put their own names first, and after it the name of the person written to,<sup>7</sup> generally with the addition of *Suo*, to express the regard or affection of the writer: on which practice Martial has the following epigram:

<sup>4</sup> Plaut. *Pseud.* Act. iv. Scen. ii. v. 29; Id. *Bacch.* Act. iv. Scen. 6. v. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Sueton. *Aug.*

<sup>6</sup> Sueton. *Jul. et Aug.*; and see Aul. Gell. lib. xvii. c. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Paulino Ausonius; *metrum sic suavit ut esses*

*Tu prior, et nomen progredere meum.*

Aus. ep. xx.



*Seu leciter noto, seu caro missa sodali:*

*Omnes ista solet charta vocare suos.*

Mart. lib. xiv. ep. xi.

Sometimes in flattery to the emperors, the letter-writer added *suus* to his own name. Thus Ælius Spartianus, the Augustan historian, superscribes his epistle to Dioclesian: "Dioclesiano Aug. Ælius Spartianus *suus* salutem." By which word '*suus*' an expression of peculiar homage and devotedness was intended; similar in sense to the Greek phrase ὁ αὐτοῦ ἰδιός, as is observed by Casaubon, who adds: "Sic Eutropius in Epistola ad Valentem. Sed non epistolæ nomen suum præscripsit, sed in ima cera, more qui hodie obtinet, subscripsit hoc modo '*Eutropius V. C. peculiariter suus*:' id. est, vestræ clementiæ peculiaris servus, aut domesticus."

Other epithets were also added where the person addressed held any office of dignity; and not unfrequently a word was used declarative of peculiar esteem, affection, or reverence; as "optimo, dulcissimo," &c. "Salutem," as wishing health and safety, followed the name in Roman, and χαίρειν, by which the same compliment was intended, usually stood prefixed to Greek epistles. The Roman letter ended with the word Vale, while the Greek concluded with Εὐρῶσο, a word of the same import. Sometimes, indeed, the letter of a Roman to his friend was closed with the more emphatic compliment of "Cura ut valeas,"—take care of your health; "fac ut diligentissime te ipsum custodias." And when an exalted person was addressed, ceremony required such words as "Deos obsecro ut te conservarint,"—Heaven preserve you!<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The letters of eastern correspondence in ancient times very frequently commenced with the introductory words, "Thus says," ὥδε λέγει. In this manner begins the letter of Amasis, the Egyptian king, to Polycrates, and of Orates to the same tyrant of Samos, as given us in the Third Book of Herodotus; Ἀμασις Πολυκράτει, ὥδε λέγει, Ὀρατης Πολυκράτει, ὥδε λέγει; and to the letter in Thucydides, i. 129, ὥδε λέγει βασιλεὺς Σιρῆς Πανσανία, which letters will be produced in their proper place. The letter of the king of Assyria to the king of Jerusalem is commenced with similar introductory words "Thus saith the king of Assyria," 2 Kings, xviii. 31. Wesseling,

in his note on the passage in Herodotus, above cited, says of this epistolary form of commencement, "Nihil simplicius et per Orientem olim probatus hac in Epistolis et Regum edictis formula."

Ælian, in his *Book of Various Histories*, l. xii. c. 51, has a pleasant story, of which we are here reminded. "Menecrates, a physician of Syracuse, was so elated with the extraordinary cures performed by him, that he assumed the title of Jove, as being the dispenser of life to man; and accordingly, in a letter to Philip, king of Macedon, he adopted the following address: Φίλιππε Μενεκρατης ὁ Ζεὺς ἐν πατρίῳ: 'To Philip Menecrates Jupiter sends felicity:' to which the monarch replied, heading his letter thus: Φίλιππος Μενεκρατι ὑγιαίνει, 'Philip to Menecrates sends sanity.'" The anecdote which follows is amusing. Philip having ordered a sumptuous banquet, invited the celestial physician. The invitation was condescendingly accepted by Menecrates, who being introduced, was respectfully seated by himself at a separate table, with a censer placed before him; in which situation he was left to regale himself with the fumes of the incense. At first he was much pleased with the homage shewn him; but after a while growing hungry, and finding nothing more substantial proposed to him, he left the place with much dissatisfaction.

The first use of the salutation χαίρειν is ascribed by many of the Greek grammarians to the demagogue, Cleon, who, they say, prefixed it, instead of ἐν πατρίῳ, to his letter informing the Athenians of his victory at Pylum. But Xenophon, who would not have borrowed from Cleon, prefixed it to the pleasing letter which he makes Cyrus write to Cyaxares; *Κυρον Παίδ.* lib. iv. Artemidorus, who wrote about a century before Christ, says, that the words χαίρειν and εὐρῶσο, were the familiar beginning and ending of every epistle, *ἰδιὸν πάσης ἐπιστολῆς*. And Horace alludes to the custom in lib. i. ep. 8:

"Celso gaudere et bene rem gerere Albinovano  
Musa rogata refer."

According to Lucian, Plato censured the practice as *μοχθηρὸν*, (poor and vulgar,) though he himself uses it in his third epistle to Dionysius. He prefers the word *σωφρονεῖ*, or the words *γινώθι σεαυτὸν*, as a better salutation. But he did not banish the word χαίρειν. It is prefixed to the letter sent by the apostles and elders to the brethren at Antioch, to which εὐρῶσο is subjoined; and so also the letter from Claudius Lysias to Felix, *Acts xxiii.* which letter has a claim, from the situation in which we find it, to be regarded as genuine; the words *περιχρῶσαν τὸν ρυτὸν τούτον*, being properly translated in our Bible, "after this manner," and not "in this form," or "tenour." Diogenes Laertius notices the different salutations prefixed to the letters of the Greek philosophers — *Diog. Laert.* lib. iii. s. 61.

## CHAPTER V.

## CONVEYANCE BY POSTS.

THE conveyance of despatches and royal letters and messages, by regular couriers, was a provision that entered into the policy of very ancient states or kingdoms in the eastern portion of the globe. Job compares the transitoriness of life to the swiftness of the *post*.<sup>1</sup> And again, in Jeremiah, c. li. v. 31. "One *post* shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken." So, in the third chapter of the book of Esther, v. 13, we read, that "letters were sent by the posts into all the king's provinces." In Persia, more especially, the institution of regular posts appears to have been an object of attention as early at least as the reign of Cyrus. The passage in the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon is very clear and particular on this head. "We have been informed also of another invention of Cyrus for promoting the prosperity of his empire, by providing a method of communication whereby intelligence might be brought of what happened in places the most remote. Having considered what journey a horse was capable of performing in the course of a day, he ordered stables accordingly to be prepared at the proper distances from each other, and stationed horses in each of them, with persons to take care of them and have them in readiness. He placed also a person at each of these stations, who might receive the letters brought to them and hand them over to others, taking due care of the tired men and horses, and providing others fresh and prepared for going forward. In this manner the conveyance was to be carried on successively by night as well as by day;—an arrangement so complete, that Xenophon thus speaks of it:

<sup>1</sup> Job, ix. 25. *רץ* signifies a runner or courier.

"Some say the progress was more rapid than the flight of cranes. If this be an over-statement, it is however certain, that no journey by a human being made on land was ever so expeditious."<sup>2</sup> The same institution of *posts* in the Persian empire, as it existed in the time of Xerxes, is noticed by Herodotus in the following manner. A man and horse were posted at the regular intervals of a day's journey, to deliver the letters to each other in succession, till they reached the place of their destination. From one relay to the other the journey was to be performed in the time prescribed, whatever might be the state of the weather or the obstacles of the way; and the historian remarks, that nothing mortal was ever known to proceed with greater celerity.<sup>3</sup>

This institution is expressed by the word *αγγαγεῖον*, in the Ionic idiom of Herodotus *αγγαγήον*, a term borrowed from the language of Persia, where it appears, if not to have had its origin, at least to have attained to great perfection. The messengers employed had the name of *αγγαροί*, *angari*; and the noun *αγγαρεία*, from its primary use in designating the institution and conduct of the posts, came at length to indicate any compulsory service, but especially a journey by constraint. The verb *αγγαγεῖν* has also this derivative sense, and is thus used in St. Matthew's Gospel, ch. v. ver. 41: "Whosoever shall compel thee to go (*αγγαγεῖν*) a mile, go with him twain." The force of which word in the original is not properly understood, but by adverting to the authority of the *αγγαροί*, to press others into their service by way of expediting the post. The principal couriers or postmasters of Persia appear to have been persons of some importance in the dominions of the Persian monarchs; and, if we may credit Plutarch on this head, Darius Codomannus was originally one of that order; a circumstance, among many others, affording some confirmation to the testimony which history bears to the pains bestowed in this quarter of the globe, at an early period,

<sup>2</sup> Xenoph. *Κυρον Παύσαιας*, βιβλ. II. 642. ed. Hutch. 1727.

<sup>3</sup> Herod. *Uran.* 98.

on the means of conveying intelligence and instructions between places at great distances from each other. Throughout the eastern states a similar attention to the establishment of posts, or the provisions for the rapid conveyance of important despatches, appears to have been paid, and continued to modern times. In the dominions of the Mogul emperors, as well as in the provinces subjugated by the Turks and Tartars, the speed of couriers on foot, or on the backs of horses or dromedaries, has been always an object of great importance. A modern traveller, who relates in a very entertaining manner his journey from British India to Bochara, gives the following account: "We continued our march to Tugduluk, and passed the Soorkh road, or red river, by a bridge, with a variety of other small streams, which pour the melted snow of the Sufued Kob into that rivulet. On our way we could distinguish that the road had once been made, and also the remains of the post-houses which had been constructed every five or six miles by the Mogul emperors, to keep up a communication between Delhi and Cabool. They may even be traced across the mountains of Balkh; for both Humaioun and Aurungzebe, in their youth, were governors of that country. "What an opinion," adds the traveller, "does this inspire of the grandeur of the Mogul empire; it had a system of communication between the most distant provinces as perfect as the posts of the Cæsars."<sup>4</sup> In our admiration, however, of these magnificent arrangements for the facilitation of correspondence, we must not attribute to these eastern establishments such a provision for general communication as is made by our modern posts. These public conveyances were contrived only for the service of the state, or rather of the court, and for the transmission of instructions and despatches; and if they were occasionally made use of by private persons, or for personal communication, the risk of disclosure must have made it an unfit and unsafe vehicle. Servants, hired messengers, or travelling friends, furnished the only

<sup>4</sup> Travels to Bochara, by Lieut. Burnes.



means of carrying on a free correspondence; and it is easy to imagine how greatly the uncivilized, unsettled, and tumultuous state of those ancient communities multiplied the chances of miscarriage; not to mention the negligence or treachery of the private irresponsible hands to which the charge was necessarily committed. The old historians record numerous instances of subtle expedients and contrivances to transmit intelligence so as to avoid the danger of treachery or discovery. The story of the tablet covered with wax after the letters had been engraved on the wood, and sent by Demaratus to the Lacedæmonians, has been related in a former part of this volume, where it was introduced to shew the early use of these waxen tablets; and Herodotus has several other similar anecdotes.

The transmission of information by letters was always attended with risk or uncertainty in the disorderly state of ancient manners; the establishment of posts being (as I have observed) rather an organ of courts and governments, than a medium of general communication. Private hands and special messengers were perpetually betraying their employers, as we may learn from the history as well as the drama of the ancients. Herodotus records a striking instance of treachery in the conduct of the internuncius of Histæus, who, instead of carrying the epistles of that general to his friends in Ionia, who were plotting with him against the Persian government, delivered them to Artaphernes, the great Persian satrap and commander in that province.<sup>5</sup> The stratagem of Harpagus, who despatched a letter in the body of a hare to the young Cyrus to persuade him to take up arms against his grandfather Astyages, is one among several curious methods of eluding discovery in the conveyance of secret intelligence, which we meet with in the same historian.<sup>6</sup>

The story of Artabazus is as follows: That general having laid siege to Potidæa, was informed that Timoxenus was disposed to deliver up the city by treachery; but it being a

<sup>5</sup> Herod. lib. vi. s. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Herod. lib. i. s. 123, 4.

On one occasion, however, Ariabazus missed the mark, and the arrow, instead of falling where it was intended, struck the shoulder of one of the citizens. The people, gathered round him, and taking up the arrow, on which they found the letter, carried it to the proper authorities, and thus the plot was discovered.<sup>7</sup>

Another more subtle method<sup>8</sup> is related of the same Histaspes before mentioned. Being detained at Susa by the Persian king, and wishing to convey to Aristagoras, at Miletus in Ionia, information of his intended defection, he shaved the head of one of his servants, on whose fidelity he relied, and wrote, or rather engraved, upon his skull a message containing the secret. After this was done, the hair was suffered to grow again, and as soon as this had taken place, the man was sent to Miletus, where he safely arrived, and delivered his message to Aristagoras, who was to cause the man's head to be again shorn, and to read what was inscribed upon it.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Herod. lib. viii. s. 128.

<sup>8</sup> Herod. lib. v. s. 95.

<sup>9</sup> Humboldt informs us, in his "Vues Pittoresques des Cordillères," that, in order to maintain a post communication between the shores of the South Sea and the province of Jacn de Brancamoras, Indians are employed, who every two days descend the river Guancabamba, or Chamaya, and afterwards ascend the Amazon river, as far as Tomependa. The courier, before he commits himself to the water, wraps the few letters with which he is charged monthly, in a handkerchief, and at other times in a species of drawers called

The scytale of the Spartans was a notable contrivance. Two small cylinders of wood were smoothed and polished in the same manner, and made to agree with the utmost exactness in length and thickness. One of these was given to the general about to take the field, and its fellow retained by the magistrates at home. Round one of these pieces of wood a leather strap was wound, the edges touching each other in every part with a perfect adjustment, and ending exactly with the wood at each extremity. When a secret despatch was to be sent, it was written along the cylinder, and over the places where the edges of the strap were in contact. When the strap was removed, the letters and words were detached so as to fall into illegible disorder and confusion, and in this state it was sent to the general, who alone could make out the sense, by winding the strap round his own cylinder, which brought again all the letters into their proper places, making them coincide as they had done when they were written on the cylinder in the hands of the council at Sparta; and thus secrecy was maintained between the parties.<sup>10</sup>

It was customary with the Roman generals when writing to the senate the news of a victory gained by their valour and conduct, to fold their letters in laurel leaves. A report had reached Rome of a defeat supposed to have been sustained by Posthumius in a battle with the Æqui, which

swimming couriers—*el coreo que nada*—have no occasion to encumber themselves with provisions, their wants being abundantly supplied by the hospitable inhabitants of the cottages which they pass on the banks of the rivers. A similar mode of securing the letters entrusted to their care, is adopted by the couriers of Hindostan: when compelled, as they frequently are, to cross a river by swimming, they deposit the letters in the turban, and thus convey them safely to the opposite shore. One of these men having failed to make his appearance at the appointed time, messengers were despatched to search for him. On the banks of a river which flowed across their route lay the dead body of an alligator, with its jaws distended as if it had suffered a violent death. They proceeded to examine it more closely, and discovered the head of the unfortunate courier completely choking up the passage of the throat, so that the animal had died from strangulation; the letter was found uninjured in the turban.

<sup>10</sup> The scytale of Sparta is explained in *Aul. Gell. Noct. Att. lib. xvii. c. 9*

spread through the city great consternation. But the tide of success was turned; and the Romans achieved so complete a victory as nearly to annihilate the army of *Æqui*. *Litteræ laureatæ* announced the event, and proclaimed that the enemy's army was extinguished. "*Æquorum exercitum deletum.*"<sup>11</sup>

It seems a little strange that, as the institution of posts had existed so long in the eastern parts of the world, the Romans should have been so long without them, as it does not appear that even in the time of Cicero any public provision had been made for the conveyance of letters of any description. The carriage was committed to some private hand, or special messenger, usually a slave, who was called *tabellarius*. Men of high condition often employed slaves, or freedmen, to write their letters, called *amanuenses*; which domestics were held in great consideration, as persons of a very confidential character. Sometimes, indeed, the proper and expedient time for the delivery of the letter was left to the discretion of the *tabellarius*. Cicero, in a letter to Brutus, thus writes: "*Permagnum interest, quo tibi hæc tempore epistola reddita sit: utrum cum sollicitudinis aliquid haberes, an cum ab omni molestia vacuus esses. Itaque ei præcepi, quem ad te misi, ut tempus observaret epistolæ tibi reddendæ. Nam quemadmodum coram qui ad nos intempestive adeunt, molesti sæpe sunt; sic epistolæ offendent non loco redditæ. Si autem, ut spero, nihil te perturbat, nihil impedit: et ille, cui mandavi, satis scite, et commode tempus ad te cepit adeundi; confido me, quod velim, facile a te impetraturum.*"<sup>12</sup>

It appears, however, from Suetonius, that Augustus Cæsar felt the inconvenience arising from the want of a public provision for the transmission of important despatches; and, that in order to establish a speedy intercourse with the provinces of the empire, he first stationed young men at moderate intervals along the high roads, and afterwards chariots, to facilitate the transport of letters, and oral intelligence.<sup>13</sup> And this

<sup>11</sup> Tit. Liv. l. v. c. 28.

<sup>12</sup> Cic. ad Fam. lib. xi. ep. xvi.; and see Horat. lib. i. ep. xiii.

<sup>13</sup> Sueton. August.

continued to be the practice of his successors. The word *post* is Roman, if we suppose it, as is probable, to be derived from *positus*, the carriers being placed, or posted, at certain settled distances from each other. It does not seem, however, that regular relays of horses were part of the institution. The messengers seized any horses they could find, till Trajan appointed regular horse stations for the conveyance of despatches and intelligence, of which a particular mention is made in the Theodosian code, "*de Cursu Publico*." It was not, however, till in quite modern times, that this most useful provision came under a regular and general management, so as to be a system of popular economy and common convenience. Lewis Hornigk, who has furnished, in the German language, a full and accurate treatise on posts, tells us that they were first settled on this large scale, by the Count de Taxis, at his own expense; in acknowledgment of which the Emperor Matthias, in 1616, gave him in fief the charge of postmaster under him and his successors.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Rollin relates that France was indebted for the great conveniency of the post to the University of Paris. That University being at the time of its institution the only one in the kingdom, and having great numbers of scholars resorting to it from all parts of the country, took into its employment messengers, whose business it was not only to bring clothes, silver, and gold for the students, but also to carry bags of law proceedings, informations, and inquests; and, in process of time, to conduct all sorts of persons, indifferently, to and from Paris, finding horses and diet; as also to convey letters, parcels, and packets, for the public, as well as the University. In the University registers of the faculty of arts, these messengers are often styled *nunci volantes*. So that, it would appear, that the state is indebted to the University of Paris for the commencement of this establishment of messengers and letter-carriers; and these offices seem to have been at first maintained at the cost and charge of the University.

There were never any ordinary royal messengers till Henry III. first established them in the year 1576, by his edict; granting to them the same rights and privileges as the kings, his predecessors, had conceded to the messengers of the University. According to the authority from which this statement is taken, the University never had any other fund or support than the profits arising from the post-office; and it was upon the foundation of the same revenue, that Lewis XV., by his decree of the Council of State, 14th of April, 1719, and by his letters patent, registered in Parliament, and in the Chamber of Accounts, ordered, that in all the colleges of the said University, the



should be taught gratis, and to that end for the time to come, appropria-  
to the University one twenty-eighth part of the revenue arising from  
the lease or farm of the posts and messengers of France, which twenty-  
mounted in that year to 184,000 livres, or thereabouts, (£8,500)

own country, we find but little trace of anything like a post estab-  
till about the twenty-third year of our Queen Elizabeth. In the  
of society, private persons departed but seldom from their homes  
ties, and the business of commerce was transacted with very little  
tion. The king's letters and writs, to summon his barons, command  
his, and collect his revenues, were carried by special messengers,  
the medium of a general establishment, for the conduct and expenses  
the charges and payments make frequent items in the records of the  
treasury; which practice was imitated by the more powerful nobles,  
their nuncios among their retainers. For these nuncios, by degrees, fixed  
stations were established, for the maintenance of regular relays; and  
of Edward IV., during the war with Scotland, certain posts, twenty  
miles, are said to have been fixed for a succession of carriers, who were  
equipped and furnished with means as to expedite the conveyance at  
the rate of one hundred miles per diem.

Statute 2 & 3 Edw. VI. c. 3, "the rate for the hire of post-horses for the  
conveyance of letters was fixed at one penny per mile; and in 1581, we first  
saw a postmaster in England. James I. appointed a chief postmaster,  
in superintendence of the foreign post-office department, who was to have  
the taking up, sending and conveying of all packets and letters concerning  
the king or business, to be despatched into foreign parts, with power to grant  
salaries." To these postmasters, the privilege of carrying letters on  
the public was confined, and protected by exclusive and inhibitory  
acts. In 1641, chiefly on the plea of establishing a quick communica-  
tion between the dominant power in the state and the Parliamentary forces,  
post-stages were set up and fixed in various parts of the kingdom, and  
John Prideaux, a member of the House of Commons, was made master  
of the post and couriers. But, in 1655, an act was passed "to settle the  
post in England, Scotland, and Ireland," which enacts, that "there shall  
be a general Post-office, and one officer, styled the Postmaster-General of  
England and Comptroller of the Post-office, who was to have the hiring of  
the horses and persons riding in post, the prices whereof were fixed; and  
persons were forbidden to set up and employ any foot-posts, horse-  
posts, or packet boats." These provisions were confirmed after the restora-  
tion of the monarchy. A penny post was afterwards, in 1683, established for  
London, and a long series of Parliamentary arrangements succeeded  
during the reign of Queen Anne to the present era.

## CHAPTER VI.

## LETTERS ATTRIBUTED TO PHALARIS.

IF the letters given to the public as the letters of Phalaris, the tyrant of Agrigentum, were genuine, they would deservedly rank among the most curious monuments of remote antiquity. The familiar correspondence of so remarkable a personage, contemporary with Solon and Pythagoras, would so approximate us to those ancient times, that to him who delights in comparing and contrasting the manners of mankind at periods widely distant from each other, nothing could offer a more rational entertainment. Letters that would carry us back to the distance of nearly five hundred years from the age of Cicero, whose correspondence presents the earliest approved specimens of this kind, would interest a mind disposed to inquiries into the moral and social history of our species, as much, at least, as anything that remains to us of authentic antiquity.

Sir William Temple, whose own compositions in the same department of literature, by some, are esteemed among the best models in our language, in his "Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning," written, indeed, under a strong bias in preference of the ancients, thus expresses himself on the subject: "It may, perhaps, be further affirmed in favour of the ancients, that the oldest books we have, are still, in their kind, the best. The two most ancient that I know of in prose, among those we call profane authors, are "*Æsop's Fables*," and "*Phalaris's Epistles*," both living near the same time, which was that of Cyrus and Pythagoras. As the first has been agreed by all ages since, for the greatest master in his kind, and all others of that sort have been but imitators of his original; so

I think the epistles of Phalaris to have more race, more spirit, more force of wit and genius, than any others I have ever seen, either ancient or modern. I know several learned men (or that usually pass for such, under the name of critics,) have not esteemed them genuine; and Politian, with some others, have attributed them to Lucian; but I think he must have little skill in painting, that cannot find out this to be an original. Such diversity of passions, upon such variety of actions, and passages of life and government; such freedom of thought; such boldness of expression; such bounty to his friends; such scorn of his enemies; such honour of learned men; such esteem of good; such knowledge of life; such contempt of death; with such fierceness of nature, and cruelty of revenge,—could never be represented but by him that possessed them. And I esteem Lucian to have been no more capable of writing than of acting what Phalaris did. In all one wrote you find the scholar and the sophist; and all the other, the tyrant and the commander.”<sup>1</sup>

That such praise from such authority should have brought the epistles into great credit and popularity among scholars, is no matter of wonder.

The Essay of Sir William was published in 1690, and in 1695 a new edition of the epistles, given to the world as the epistles of Phalaris, of which a Manuscript was preserved in the Royal Library, was published at Oxford, by the Honourable Charles Boyle, then a student of Christ Church, under the auspices of the Dean of the College, and with the assistance of

Franciscus Aretinus, who has edited these epistles with a Laun translation, thus speaks of them in his Proœmium: “Perlege, queso, has epistolas diligenter; et si illius considerabis ingenium invenies in Phalaride nullum emulationis argumentum. Invenies maximi animi virum qui neminem formidet neminem ad gratiam alloquatur. Invenies aperte frontis hominem; qui quod animo id etiam ore habere videatur; qui nullam boni viri opinionem contemnit; quippe qui et gloriam, et omnium adulationem recuset atque contemnat. Visne in deos, in patriam, pietatis exemplum, habes Phalarim. Visne studiorum, musarumque amatorem, Phalarim intueri. Cæterum his epistolis nihil gravius, acutius, pressius, et Græcorum et Latinorum pace sacrum, in hoc scribendi genere invenies.” Ed. 1471.

the editor's friends. It was imputed to Bentley, then the Keeper of the King's Library, that he did not permit the bookseller of the editor to have the possession of the Manuscript a sufficiently long time for his examination; and an allusion to this alleged illiberality, contained in the preface to the work, followed by a refusal to cancel the leaf, upon an explanation from Bentley, engendered those acrimonious feelings which found their full indulgence in the controversy concerning the genuineness of these epistles; and a mere question of literary research became the pretext for waging war upon each other's reputation.

In 1694 appeared the first edition of "Wotton's Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning." As an appendix to this work, Bentley had promised the author to furnish a dissertation, in which he was to shew the letters of Phalaris, as well as *Æsop's Fables*, to be spurious. He was prevented by some circumstances from performing his engagement; but on Mr. Wotton's proceeding with a new edition, he was called upon to fulfil his promise; which was done, by his supplying to this edition a dissertation upon the epistles of Phalaris, Themistocles, Socrates, Euripides, and others. This second edition of Mr. Wotton's work, accordingly, appeared in 1697, with the promised dissertation annexed; and in the following year came out the answer from the exasperated editors of the epistles, the greater part of which was considered as the production of Atterbury. This answer, which, though not without some learning and ingenuity, was more remarkable for its asperity and railery, soon reached a second edition. The provocation was great, and the retaliation upon the part of Bentley was more than commensurate. In 1699 appeared the work of that great scholar and critic, entitled, "A Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris: with an Answer to the Objections of the Honourable Charles Boyle;" a monument of learned and critical disquisition, and standing at the head of all labours of this kind. It terminated the contention; and did so, as the best scholars have judged, by making a reply impossible. In his answer to Dr. Bentley's

tations on this subject, the editor had declared that his doubts about the authority of the epistles had been thereby lessened; and that if the author of that dissertation were to write once more upon the subject, perhaps the point would be clear to him. Dr. Bentley produced his second dissertation; Mr. Boyle and his friends were silent; but the world would have not considered that their silence proceeded from their conviction of the genuineness of the epistles.

Bentley observes in the introduction to his second dissertation, that to forge and counterfeit books, and to ascribe them upon great names, has been a practice almost as old as time, and refers us to a passage in the works of Galen, to confirm his statement, that "this practice was most in fashion among the kings of Pergamus and Alexandria, rivalling one another in the magnificence and copiousness of their libraries, and great rates for any treatises that carried the names of celebrated authors." What was then done chiefly for lucre, afterwards done out of glory and affectation, as an exercise of wit, and an ostentation of wit. "Some," says again the great critic, "confessed that they feigned letters and treated as a mere trial of their skill; but most of them took another way, and, concealing their own names, put off their works for originals; preferring that silent pride, and fraudulent pleasure, though it was to die with them, before an empty commendation from posterity for being good imitators." "Isole," says Erasmus, "quas nobis reliquit nescio quis nomine, nomine *Phalaridis*, nomine *Senecæ* et *Pauli*, quid censeri possunt quam declamatiunculæ?"<sup>2</sup> "Such," says Lord Shaftesbury, speaking of letters which were written by the ancients as exercises or specimens of the wit of their contemporaries, "were those infinite numbers of Greek and Latin letters written by the ancient sophists, grammarians, and rhetoricians; where we find the real character, and the genuine style and manner, of the corresponding parties sometimes preserved; but at other times not so much as aimed at, nor the treasures of historical truth preserved."

<sup>2</sup> *Erasm. Epist. lib. i. epist. 1.*



Who was the sophist that composed the epistles passing under the name of Phalaris, the tyrant of Agrigentum, does nowhere appear. Politian, as noticed in the laudatory passage above produced from Sir William Temple, ascribed them to Lucian: an unfounded surmise as well in the judgment of Sir William Temple, as in that of most other men of discernment; Lucian being considered by the learned knight as incompetent to the work, and by others, including Dr. Bentley, as disgraced by the imputation. But the letters in question have obtained credit with some persons of literary rank; and even Selden, as Dr. Bentley has observed, drew an argument on a point of chronology from them in his treatise on the Arundelian marbles.<sup>2</sup> Stobæus, Suidas, and Johannes Tzetzes, among the ancients, make mention of the letters of Phalaris; and they, as they intimate no doubts concerning them, may be concluded to have regarded them as authentic originals. But the supporters of the letters have all been silenced and confounded by the learning and sagacity of the great critic, who, by proofs drawn from the depths of his own recondite erudition, and displayed and reasoned upon in his characteristic style of conscious superiority, has exposed the cheat, and stripped the tyrant of his false plumage.

Dr. Bentley's objections to the title of the letters of Phalaris to be received as genuine productions, are chiefly drawn from their chronological inconsistencies, which appear to have escaped the sagacity of other scholars. But these were not the only indications of the fraud. It was decided by other tests familiar to the experienced eye of the great critic. And such was the depth of his acquaintance with the progress, the stages, the varieties, and the whole idiomatic structure of the Greek language; such his skill in the application of his knowledge, and his general powers of reasoning, that every covering of art and disguise was effectually removed, and the imposition placed beyond all controversy or doubt.<sup>3</sup> A

<sup>2</sup> P. 106.

<sup>3</sup> "Bentleius in dissertatione de Phalaridis, Themistoclis, Socratis, Euripidis, aliorumque Epistolis, et de fabulis Æsopi; in responsione quoque, quæ

Soidas had said that Phalaris wrote very admirable letters, *πιστολας θαυμαστας πανν*, and Stobæus and Tzetzes had noted several of them as genuine, it became of no small importance to historic truth, that the world should be un-  
deceived on this subject; and it therefore owes much to Dr. Bentley for his clear exposition of the fraud attempted to be  
perpetrated upon it by the anonymous impostor, and the per-  
petrator's support given to the delusion by men of great re-  
puted learning.

The anachronisms pointed out by the dissertation are numerous. I will select a few, and first, respecting the letter  
of Pythagoras. The chronological dates assigned in ancient  
authors to both Phalaris and Pythagoras are various. But  
the preponderance of authority places the birth of Pythagoras  
at Olymp. xliii.; his *ακμή* or flourishing period at Olymp. lxi.;  
and his death at Olymp. lxxviii.; and Phalaris, according to an  
account assigning to him the earliest period, began his tyranny  
over the Agrigentines Olymp. xxxi. 2, and ended it Olymp.  
lxviii. 2; which statement with respect to Phalaris, if true,  
makes it impossible for him to have written the letter in ques-  
tion to Pythagoras. The account most favourable to the pre-  
tended letters represents the government of the tyrant to  
have commenced Olymp. liii. 4, and ended with his existence,  
Olymp. lvi. 3; according to which latter statement, though  
the tyrant and the philosopher were contemporary, a cor-  
respondence between them was very improbable.

In the epistle to the people of Enna, a city of Sicily,  
demanding from them the repayment of money which they  
had borrowed from him, Phalaris tells them, that the Hy-  
cuntenses and Phintienses, or people of Phintia, had promised  
to lend him money at interest; whereas, from a fragment  
of Diodorus, an accurate writer, a Sicilian, and of course  
well acquainted with the history of his country, it appears,  
that Phintias, a tyrant of Agrigentum, first built the city

*orationem suam vindicat a censura Caroli Boyle, sic evincit has epistolas  
a nomine Phalaridis a recentiore sophista fuisse confictas, ut ea res amplius  
controversiam cadere non possit." Ed. Lannep. Pref. Valckenaer. v.*

of Phintia, calling it by his own name, Olymp. cxxv. about two hundred and seventy years after the death of Phalaris. Add to this, that the author of the epistles mentions the Geloans and Phintienses as different nations, existing at the same time; whereas Phintia was built after Gela was rased and dispeopled, and was the place to which the residue of the Geloans were transplanted.

Again, in another letter, Stesichorus the poet is threatened by the tyrant for raising money and soldiers against him at Aluntium and Alæsa; but from the same Diodorus it appears that Alæsa was first built by Archonides, a Sicilian, Olymp. xciv. 2, or, as others say, about two years before, making a difference of one hundred and forty years between the latest period of Phalaris and the existence of the city of which he is made to speak; for though there might be other cities of that name in Sicily, the Alæsa of Archonides must have been the same as that alluded to in the epistles, as it was on the same coast, and only a small distance from Himera and Aluntium.

Polyclitus, the Messenian physician, had performed a cure upon Phalaris, and the tyrant expresses his sense of the obligation in a letter to him upon the subject; giving at the same time an account of the presents he was about to make him; among which were ten pairs of Thericlean cups. These cups had their name from the inventor and fabricator of them, Thericles, a Corinthian potter; who, as we learn from Athenæus, was contemporary with Aristophanes the comedian. Now the plays left us of Aristophanes are known to have been written between the eighty-ninth and ninety-seventh Olympiads, an interval of thirty-six years, the first of which dates one hundred and twenty years after the death of Phalaris.

In a letter to Timonactus, the tyrant exults in the victory obtained by him over the Zancleans, and in a preceding letter he writes to the Messenians, having also before addressed Polychtus, his physician, as a Messenian; from which it would appear that, in Phalaris's time, Zancle and Messana were two

different towns. But Strabo tells us, that Messana was before called Zancle; and Herodotus and Diodorus say the same thing. The fact is also affirmed by Thucydides, who says, that the Zancleans were driven out by the Samians and other Ionians that fled from the Medes about Olymp. lxx. 4, and that *οὐ πολλῶ ὕστερον*, not long afterwards, Anaxilas, king of Rhegium, drove the Samians themselves out, and called the town Messana, from the Peloponnesian Messana, the country of his ancestors.<sup>5</sup> Of the same Anaxilas, Diodorus records the death as happening Olymp. lxxvi. 1, after having reigned eighteen years; so that, taking the death of Phalaris to have happened Olymp. lvii. 3, fifty years elapsed between that event and the change of the name of Zancle to that of Messana. In confirmation of which argument, it is worthy of notice, that Simonides, the lyric poet, is recorded to have made an epigram on his success in obtaining the prize of song<sup>6</sup> at the age of eighty, when Adimantus was Archon at Athens; and from the Parian Chronicle we know that Adimantus was Archon Olymp. lxxv. 3. Now, that Simonides was contemporary with Anaxilas, is thus established: Heraclides has preserved the record, that when Anaxilas, the Messenian, the tyrant of Rhegium, had obtained the victory with his mules at Olympia, he gave a treat to the spectators, and Simonides made a copy of verses upon his victory. Heraclides was a scholar of Aristotle, in whose *Treatise on Rhetoric* the following story occurs: That when one who had got the prize at Olympia with his chariot of mules offered Simonides a small fee to make an ode upon his victory, he pretended he would not disgrace his muse by so mean a subject as mules: but when the person advanced a great price, he could presently call them, not mules, but the daughters of mares. *Χαίρετ' ἀελλοποδῶν θυγατέρες ἵππων*. The person not named by Aristotle is shewn by his scholar to

<sup>5</sup> Thucyd. vi. 4, 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Πρὸς μὲν Ἀδιμαντος Ἀθηναίου, δρ' Ἰνικα*

*Ἀκτίοχης φύλη παιδαλίον τριπόδα.* See Schol. on Hermogenes, p. 410; and see Val. Max. viii. 7.

have been Anaxilas, who first changed the name of Zancle to that of Messana, above half a century after Phalaris made to entitle it by the latter appellation, and to treat it as a distinct city.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Bentley seems to have made it sufficiently clear, that Pausanias had committed an error in stating that Zancle was first called Messana at Olymp. xxix.; but supposing Pausanias correct, the advocates of the epistles could derive no advantage from his authority; so then how did it happen that the tyrant, who lived above a hundred years after, made mention both of Zancle and Messana, thus retaining the former name, and splitting the city into two?

Diodorus relates, that some Sicilians planted themselves at Olymp. xvi. 1, upon a hill called Taurus, near the ruins of Naxos, and built a new town there, which they called Tauromenium, ἀπὸ ταύρος καὶ μένιν, from their settlement upon Taurus; and about forty years after this, Olymp. cv. 3 one Andromachus, a Tauromenite, gathered all the remnants of the old Naxians that were dispersed through Sicily, and persuaded them to fix there.<sup>8</sup> But the tyrant, in Epist. lxxxv. writes, that he had utterly routed the Tauromenites and the same name is given them in several other of the pretended epistles; whereas in the days of Phalaris, this people was called by no other name than Naxians. Thus Pliny "Taurominium quæ antea Naxos;"<sup>9</sup> and Solinus, "Taurominium quam prisci Naxon vocabant."<sup>10</sup> If it has been called Taurominium by Porphyry,<sup>11</sup> in his life of Pythagoras, and by Jamblicus,<sup>12</sup> and perhaps others of a comparatively modern date, yet this may clearly be explained by referring to the common use of the prolepsis; whereas by

<sup>7</sup> The victory of Anaxilas could not have taken place before Olymp. lxx. as it appears from Pausanias that the ἀγῶνη, or the chariot drawn by mules was not used at the Olympic races till that date. Pausan. p. 155, ἡμικοὶ ἀπὸ ἰππῶν. They were soon left off.

<sup>8</sup> Diod. lib. xiv. p. 282.

<sup>9</sup> Plin. iii. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Solin. c. xi. ("Colonia Taurominia quam," &c. cap. v. ed. Salm.—D.

<sup>11</sup> Vita Pythag. p. 169.

<sup>12</sup> Jamb. p. 128.



that it could only have been so called by a prophetic designation. In truth, the town of Naxos was destroyed by the Syracusans, Olymp. xciv. 2,<sup>13</sup> and seven years afterwards Tauromenium was founded, Olymp. xcvi. 1. That the city should, both by Herodotus and Thucydides, be called Naxos, is in consistency with the above stated chronology.

There are several moral sentences scattered over the epistles, which were borrowed from later writings, and which the diligent learning of Dr. Bentley enabled him to trace and identify; *ὅτι λόγος ἔργου σκία παρὰ τοῖς σωφρονιστέροις πεποιται*—that “wise men take words for the shadow of things,” was a saying of Democritus,<sup>14</sup> who lived about a hundred years after Phalaris. *Θνητοὺς γὰρ οὐκ ἀθάνατον ἔχειν, ὥς φασὶ τινες, οὐ προσήκει*—“mortal men ought not to entertain immortal anger;” a passage in the fragment of the *Philoctetes* of Euripides,<sup>15</sup> and not written till about a hundred and twenty years after the death of Phalaris, is made use of by him. Epist. xxiii. is addressed to Pythagoras, and we find the doctrine and institution of that great person designated by the name of *philosophy*; a word invented by Pythagoras himself, and not likely to have been used as a technical term of course by this correspondent.

The use of the word *tragedy* in Epistle lxiii. could not escape the scrutiny of Dr. Bentley, who is thereby led into a learned discussion concerning the age of tragedy in Greece, in which he most elaborately shews that it owed its origin to Thespis, whose first performance was about the 61st Olymp.; more than twelve years after the death of Phalaris. It is something too in the silly complaint of the tyrant, Aristolochus was writing tragedies against him, that has greatly the air of imposture; for, as the critic observes, “it is upon absurdity to suppose a man, while living, to be the argument of a tragedy.”

The dialect in which these epistles are written, is not over-didactic. The language is Attic, the favourite idiom of the

<sup>13</sup> Eod. p. 246.

<sup>14</sup> *Diog. Laert. in Vit. Democ.*

<sup>15</sup> *Diog. Laert. in Vit. Democ.*

<sup>16</sup> *Diog. Laert. in Vit. Democ.*

sophists, but not of Sicily, wherein the Doric tongue was generally spoken and written. That the Attic should be, according to these epistles it would seem to have been, not only the court dialect of Agrigentum, but also that in which domestic and ordinary matters were transacted, appears very strange, especially as it was the idiom of a decided democracy which, in the days of Phalaris himself, had driven out Pisistratus, for no other reason than because he bore the name of tyrant. And even in Astypalæa, where Phalaris was said to have been born, no other idiom than the Doric can be reasonably supposed to have been in use, as it lay among a cluster of islands where the Doric was the dialect. And if Astypalæa was in Crete, where the defenders of the epistles would place it, still the argument follows him there, as the Doric was as much the language of Crete as of Sicily. Besides all this, "in the time of the true Phalaris the Attic dialect was not yet in fashion, there being at that time no Attic prose in existence, except in Draco's and Solon's laws, and in but one piece or two in verse." In addition to which remark, it is observed, that the use of certain Greek words in a sense in which they never were used but by writers of a late date, manifestly betrays the hand of the sophist.

The use of the word *θυγατηρ* in the sense of maiden; the confusion of the word *μελος* with *ελεγειον*; the application of *προνοια*, which in the days of Phalaris expressed only human prudence and foresight, to denote the providence of God—a force first given to it by Plato—and of *στοιχεια*, to signify the elements in a philosophical sense, which, until it was so used by Plato, had the sense only of the grammatical elements, or the first constituents of language,<sup>16</sup>—go no little way towards fixing a character of fraud upon these plausible letters.

In treating of the matter and business of the letters imputed to Phalaris, the censures of the critic may, perhaps, be chargeable with some excess. It may be said of them generally, that they have a sort of fictitious aspect, and a style and character which favour the suspicion of imposture;

<sup>16</sup> See the long and learned note in Lennep. 142.

but it is hardly doing them justice to treat them as altogether destitute of spirit and ingenuity. The furious determination of the people of Himera to wage a ruinous war with Catana, about the ashes of the poet Stesichorus, who had died and was buried at the last named city; and their application to the tyrant of Agrigentum for his assistance, who advises, by way of compromise, that Himera shall build a temple to the poet, and Catana remain possessed of his tomb, cannot be regarded but as an insipid and extravagant story, the offspring of an imbecile imagination. And what more can be said in behalf of those epistles which relate the supposed application by Nicocles to the tyrant, for his good offices towards obtaining for him from the same poet, Stesichorus, a copy of his verses upon his deceased wife, Clearista; upon which errand a special messenger is sent to Agrigentum, a distance of one hundred miles, to procure a request to be forwarded one hundred miles further to the author of the verses?

The rewards which Phalaris is made to bestow upon his physician for his successful treatment of a malady under which the tyrant was labouring, have the air of romance, and, naturally enough, put Dr. Bentley in mind of the lupins with which the actors in comedies so easily made their payments, and bestowed their bounties. Gold was in those days a scarce commodity in Greece. It was in Phalaris's time that the Spartans, having been commanded by the oracle to gild the face of Apollo's statue with gold, and not being able to find any of that metal in Greece, were ordered to buy it of Croesus, king of Lydia; which was done: but scarce as it was, the gratitude of Phalaris for the cure of his distemper, overflowed in a liberality that, besides the donation of ten pairs of large Thericlean cups, twenty slaves, fifty thousand Attic drachms, an annual salary as great as was paid to the chief officers of the army and fleet, could not be satisfied without the further compliment of four goblets of refined gold, and eleven silver bowls of elaborate workmanship.

When the temple of Delphi was plundered, gold was yet so scarce in Greece, that Philip of Macedon having a little

golden cup, weighing only about half a pound, troy weight, put it under his pillow every night.

It must be owned, therefore, that never was medical skill so royally rewarded; and that at a time when, in Greece, the attendance and care of physicians appear to have been but unhandsomely requited; for as we read in the Third Book of Herodotus, the celebrated Democedes, the Crotonian, but a few years after the death of Phalaris, was hired for a whole year by the Æginæans, for a single talent; for the next year, by the Athenians, for a hundred minæ, that is, a talent and two thirds; and in the year following, by Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, for two talents.

On these and other like evidences of fraud, Dr. Bentley has spared neither wit nor learning. His style of ridicule, as it is entirely his own, so is it above competition for scholastic humour and controversial raillery. His finishing topic is the long oblivion in which the letters must have reposed between the time of their composition and the date of their discovery—a thousand years; covering a period which may be regarded as the greatest and longest reign of learning that the world has seen: in all which time these famous letters were never heard of. "They first came to notice," says Dr. Bentley, "in the dusk and twilight which preceded a long night of ignorance."

During this interval various writers tell us things of Phalaris which are entirely at variance with the supposed letters. There was also within that period frequent controversy respecting the bull of Phalaris. Timæus, the Sicilian historian, who wrote in the 128th Olympiad, treats the whole as a fiction, notwithstanding all that had been said of it by historians and poets. He, therefore, could have heard nothing of the letters, or, if he had heard of them, he passed them by in silent contempt. But it is still a stronger fact, that Polybius and Diodorus, who both endeavour to refute Timæus, and establish the story of the bull, do neither of them call these letters to their aid, which, had they been in existence, and their existence known, would have furnished them with a decisive argument: and one of these writers was a Sicilian born.

The letters of Phalaris to his wife and his son, are agreeable specimens, or rather imitations, of conjugal and parental tenderness; and one could almost have wished the collection to have been proved genuine, for their sakes; but, unfortunately, they are themselves among the evidences of the fraud. The fifty-first letter makes the wife of Phalaris to have been poisoned at Astypalæa, soon after her husband's flight; and the sixty-ninth shews her again alive in Crete, many years after, when Phalaris had long reigned in Agrigentum; and assuredly the current report of the tyrant's having devoured his own son, alluded to and not discredited by Aristotle,<sup>17</sup> could never have prevailed, if the letters in question had been genuine compositions. There are five supposed to have been written by the tyrant to his son Paurola, and two to his wife Eurythia, all of which have certain turns of elegant sentiment and expression, which little comport with the qualities generally imputed to him. He has also credit for several other very agreeable letters to his friends. He is made to write as follows, to one of his generals, to console him for the loss of his son, who was slain in battle:

## PHALARIS TO LACRITUS.

For the greatness of your sorrow for the death of your son, all manner of allowance ought to be made. I cordially sympathise with you, and feel the misfortune as my own; since I look upon myself as standing in a sort of near relation to him. Although I am in the habit, perhaps, of viewing these events with a firmer mind than others, being persuaded that it answers no good purpose to indulge in immoderate grief. There is much to console you in your present distress; first, that he died in battle, fighting valiantly for his country; then, that his destiny rewarded him with so glorious a death at the moment of victory: and lastly, that, having lived a blameless life, he sealed his virtue by his death. For while a virtuous man continues in life, whether he will maintain his character, or sink below it, is uncertain; since casualties,

<sup>17</sup> Aristot. Eth. Nicom. vii. 5.



rather than prudent counsels, influence the minds of men. But he that passes unimpeached out of life, is established in his glorious estate beyond the possibility of change. Considering, therefore, his perseverance in maintaining his virtue and integrity to the last moment of his existence as a due return for his birth and bringing up, reward his memory, by bearing the loss of him with fortitude and composure.

PHALARIS TO HIS WIFE EURYTHIA.

I FEEL myself to owe you, my Eurythia, the greatest gratitude, both on my own account and on the account of the son to whom we have given birth. On my own account, because, when I was a banished man, you chose rather to remain in your bereaved state, than accept any other husband, though many were desirous of being united to you: on our son's account, because you have been a mother, a nurse, and a father to him, nor have preferred any husband to Phalaris, nor any other son to Paurola. Persist in this kind feeling towards your husband and son, and especially towards the latter, until he shall attain the age of a ripe discretion, and no longer need the guidance of either father or mother. I press these things upon you with so much earnestness, not as having any distrust of the mother of my child, and especially of such a mother, but as actuated by the fears and anxieties natural to a father. You are able from your own parental experiences, and from your sympathy with a father's feelings for his child, to pardon the importunity of this letter. Farewell.

PHALARIS TO PAUROLA HIS SON.

It behoves you, my son, to cherish the greatest affection for both your parents, and to hold them in the highest respect, for a son owes a debt of piety and gratitude to those from whom he has derived his existence, and from whom he has received so many benefits; but rather neglect your father, than your mother; for the care and assiduity which a father exercises towards his children in their nurture and bringing

up, cannot possibly equal those of the mother. She, indeed, besides bringing forth the child, and imparting to it its first nourishment, has sustained innumerable other anxieties in rearing it. But the father has the enjoyment of his child, after he has reached his adult state, under the education of his mother, without having experienced any trouble. Your mother, under peculiar difficulties, and greater than others have had to contend with, on account of my exile, has laboured hard to prepare you for the age of manhood; doing the duties of both parents. So that I would have you pay the whole debt of gratitude which is usually due to both parents, to your mother, as having performed the whole work. The duties which you owe to your father will be performed, if you make your mother the engrossing object of your tenderness. I ask nothing more for myself than that you should be full of piety towards your mother. Or rather, I should say, such conduct towards her will be acknowledged by me as so much kindness actually done to myself. Thus it becomes you to lay the foundation of filial duty to your father, in acts of gratitude and affection to your mother. Farewell.

## THE SAME TO THE SAME.

WHEN I happened to be at Himera, upon some necessary business, I heard the daughters of Stesichorus sing some poems to the lyre, partly composed by their father, and partly by themselves. Those of their own were certainly inferior to their father's; but when compared with the poems of others, they were greatly superior. Insomuch, that I should esteem him to have been thrice happy who had so instructed his daughters; and those thrice happy, whose attainments had been carried to an extent beyond what was natural to their sex, by such instruction. But to come to the point, Paurola, I am very anxious to be informed with what design you are so given up to the exercise of the body in arms, and hunting, and such like pursuits; while you suffer the mind to be unexercised in study and Grecian literature; to cultivate which ought to be your chief and almost your sole object.

Regard must be had to the exercises of the body, for the sake of health, rather than strength, unless, indeed, a person desirous of qualifying himself for contending in the sacred games; but to provide by every means for the improvement of the mind, should be the great concern of him who is desirous of living with the greatest credit in a popular state. Unless, perhaps, you have resolved (which some say is the case) to seek and affect the imperial station, as that to which you are authorized by the laws to aspire; and on that account you are cultivating bodily strength, to fit you for the acquisition and maintenance of this sort of supremacy. But take counsel in this matter from one who repents of his condition as a monarch; who not spontaneously, but of necessity, has entered upon that career. He who has had experience of the life of a private man, and also of that of a monarch, would rather wish to be ruled over, than to rule. A private man has only one tyrant to fear. He is free from other disturbances. But the potentate is at once in dread of those who are without and those by whom he is guarded. Among other fears and miseries, he is under continual apprehension from the treachery of his protectors. Therefore, embracing your parent's prudent counsel, do not affect an elevation above the common lot. Leave, therefore, monarchical power, exposed as it is to constant fears and unceasing dangers, to your enemies and their children. But if your youth and inexperience persuade you to imagine that there is something pleasant and delectable in the condition of a monarch, instead of the greatest infelicity, you are altogether in an error, arising from your ignorance of what that condition really is. Pray God that he will never give you experimental knowledge of what the life is which a monarch leads.

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The letter which Phalaris is made to write to Pythagoras has a good deal of character in it, and is in no bad keeping with the general tone of the compositions of the same kind which are in this publication ascribed to the tyrant of Agrigentum. The epistle runs thus:

## TO PYTHAGORAS.

THE despotic rule of Phalaris is at the farthest distance, in the estimation of men, from the philosophy of Pythagoras. Yet, though this be the general opinion, there is no reason why we should not try its validity by the experience which an intercourse with each other will afford. Familiar converse will sometimes unite in friendship characters which may seem at first to have nothing in common. Indeed, report has brought to my ears such an account of you, that I am convinced I shall find in you one of the worthiest of men. But do not form a hasty judgment of me, nor listen to unsupported opinions concerning me. It is owing to these prejudices excited against my government as despotic and tyrannical, that it is unsafe for me to come to you; for if I should venture upon the journey without a military guard, I should be at the mercy of every one who might choose to attack or insult me; and if I proceed with a force sufficient for my protection, I shall be suspected of hostile intentions. But to you it is permitted to travel in safety, and without any apprehension of injury: there is, therefore, nothing to prevent your coming to me, and passing your time with me in perfect ease and security. When you are persuaded to make a trial of me, you will find to your surprise the private friend where you are looking for the despot; and if you are expecting the private friend, you will find a character with something in it savouring of despotism, —and that of necessity, for it is not possible to administer such a government as that with which I am invested, without a degree of severity that may amount in the opinion of some to cruelty: a despot to be safe, must take care not to err on the side of humanity. For many other reasons, but especially that you may know me as I really am, I feel very desirous of being brought into familiar intercourse with you. I shall readily be made a convert to the truth, if by the instructions of Pythagoras it shall be shewn to me that, consistently with

my personal safety, I can adopt a gentler and milder method of governing than that which I have hitherto pursued.

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In a letter supposed to have been afterwards written by the same tyrant to one of his friends, it would appear that he was successful in obtaining a visit from Pythagoras, and that the visit did him no prejudice in the esteem of the philosopher.

PHALARIS TO ORSILOCHUS.

IF the reputed unwillingness of Pythagoras, the philosopher, to visit me, has given occasion to some calumny concerning me, as you have said, coupling that statement with an opinion of your own, that he deserved praise for his prudence in avoiding my society; surely I deserve praise when it appears that he has now been my voluntary and pleased companion these five months. Unless he had found in me something suitable and agreeable to his own character and habits of thinking, he would not have remained with me an hour.



## CHAPTER VII.

### PYTHAGOREAN CORRESPONDENCE.

If we accept as genuine the following epistle from Pythagoras to the first Hiero, the communication from Phalaris to Crotopus, as exhibited in the preceding chapter, will be less worthy of belief.

#### PYTHAGORAS TO HIERO.

THE life I lead at present is easy, tranquil, and secure. But yours is by no means suitable to me. A moderate and self-denying man has no need of a Sicilian table. Pythagoras finds everywhere enough to satisfy the wants of the day. The servitude of a palace is heavy and intolerable to one not accustomed to it. A sufficiency in one's self is at once safe and honourable ; no one envies or plots against it. By living in this tranquil and secure state, we draw nearest to God. Good habits are not the offspring of luxury and sensual indulgence, but rather of that state of indigence which favours the growth of virtue. Variety and excess in pleasure enslave the souls of weak mortals, especially the pleasure in which you had your principal gratification. By thus giving yourself up to the guidance of your passions, you become captivated by them, and have no power to rescue or help yourself. While thus you live, your conversation must be the reverse of that which is profitable. Do not, therefore, ask Pythagoras to live with you. Physicians have no desire to be sharers in the diseases of their patients.<sup>1</sup>

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Another letter ascribed to Pythagoras, but of the same

<sup>1</sup> See "Court of the Gentiles," by Theoph. Gale, 135; and "Opuscula Mythologica," by Thomas Gale, Amstelædami, apud Hen. Wetstenium, 1698.

doubtful origin, has been preserved by Stobæus, and is given us among the *Fragmenta Pythagoreorum* at the end of the *Opuscula* of Thomas Gale;<sup>2</sup> which, together with some of the epistles imputed to certain scholars of the same renowned philosopher, it may not be amiss in this place to present in an English dress. The letter of Pythagoras, who was the founder of the Italic school, is to Anaximenes, a follower of Thales, and a professor of the Ionic philosophy, of which Thales laid the foundation.

#### PYTHAGORAS TO ANAXIMENES.

You, my excellent friend, if you were content to be no better than Pythagoras in generosity and glory, would leave Miletus and travel to other countries. But the glory of your own country detains you at home, and so it would me, were I of like capacity with Anaximenes to promote its prosperity. If the cities of Greece are bereaved of those who are so capable of assisting them, they not only lose that which is their grace and ornament, but the peril they are exposed to from the hostility of the Persians is greatly increased. It is not, therefore, right in your situation to be always star-gazing, but more honourable to watch over one's country. Even I am not always occupied in study, but have my thoughts sometimes engaged in the quarrels and contentions of the Italian states.

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Lysis was a scholar of Pythagoras, and is generally mentioned as the preceptor of Epaminondas; but Dr. Bentley thinks that the contemporary of Epaminondas could not have been also an auditor of Pythagoras, and is strongly of opinion that there were two persons of that name, both scholars of the Pythagorean school, the one a contemporary of Pythagoras, the other of Epaminondas, to whom history relates him

<sup>2</sup> He was greatly distinguished by his knowledge of the Greek language, of which he was the Regius Professor at Cambridge. In 1672, he was chosen Head Master of St. Paul's School, and was employed to write the inscriptions on the Monument erected in memory of the conflagration in 1666.

to have died after the catastrophe next mentioned. It is a well-recorded fact, that Lysis and Archippus, two of the scholars of the great philosopher, were the only persons who escaped from the fire in which the scholars assembled at the house of Milo, in the town of Crotona, were destroyed, in consequence of the excitement produced by their political interference:<sup>3</sup> and the interval between that event and the age of Epaminondas will not allow us, without assigning to Lysis, the auditor of Pythagoras, an improbable length of life, to suppose him to have been also the friend of Epaminondas. The letter of Lysis to Hipparchus, one of the same school, is as follows:

#### LYSIS TO HIPPARCHUS.

AFTER Pythagoras disappeared from among men, I never expected to witness the dispersion of those who had been united under his instruction and discipline. But when, contrary to expectation, they were scattered in various directions, persons coming forth from a great merchant-ship on the completion of her voyage, I considered it a sacred duty to store in my memory his divine precepts; and by no means to impart the benefits of his wisdom to those whose souls were cleansed from their defilements, even in their sleep. For I deemed it as unlawful to proffer to any persons first presenting themselves, things acquired with so much labour and study, as to divulge to the profane the mysteries of the two

<sup>3</sup> The incendiary who set fire to the house where the Pythagorean college assembled, was Cylon, a man of opulence and influence in that city. Lysis and Archippus, being the youngest and strongest of the number, escaped; of which transaction the epoch generally assigned is Olymp. 3. The death of Epaminondas at the battle of Mantinea, happened Olymp. civ. 2. Lysis is said by Diogenes Laertius to have been the author of golden verses, and there are other authorities to the same effect. Hierocles, a Pagan philosopher, who lived in the fifth century, and taught in Alexandria, wrote a commentary on the χρυσὰ, or golden verses, of which commentary Photius has preserved fragments, and ascribed them to Lysis. Jamblicus, recording this memorable slaughter of the first Pythagoreans, adds, that in the innocence of the Pythagoreans appeared to others of the city, they saved those who had destroyed them.

Eleusinian goddesses. Those who do the one or the other of these things seem to me to be equally impious. It is but reasonable to consider how much time we have consumed in washing out the spots which had become, as it were, ingrained in our minds, until, after the lapse of five years, we were made capable of hearing and receiving the discourses and doctrines of that great man. As dyers prepare the cloth by a cleansing and constringing process to receive into its substance an indelible colour, which nothing can afterwards remove; so that divine man prepared the lovers of wisdom to prevent his being disappointed in his expectations respecting those who were advancing under his discipline. For he did not deal in that spurious instruction and those snares in which the sophists entangle their inexperienced scholars, amusing them with unprofitable exercises; but he laid the true foundation in their minds of human and divine knowledge: while these sophists, pretending to teach after the manner of Pythagoras, and in appearance doing many showy and surprising things, only deceive and ensnare their youthful hearers, and render those who listen to them conceited and presumptuous. Their speculations and discourses are of a liberal and specious appearance, but are coupled with a practice of the most disorderly and gross description. It is as if one poured into the muddy bottom of a deep well pure and pellucid water, whereby the foul contents would be set in motion, and the water corrupted; just so it is with those who teach and are taught after this manner. A thick and impervious hedge seems to grow up round the hearts and minds of those who are not in the pure and regular course initiated, shutting out the ingenuous forms of mildness, modesty, and intelligence. All manner of evil principles grow rank under this thick wood, entirely intercepting the view of right reason. Among the parents of these evils, I would name first intemperance and avarice. They have, indeed, each of them a numerous offspring. Intemperance engenders impiety, excesses, and corruptions, leading to enormities and outrages against nature, and terminating in headlong ruin and destruction. Already

As we see men, urged on by their lawless passions, break through all the barriers of nature; stopping at no limits, and regardless of the rights and sanctities of kindred; reverencing neither the authority of parent, or law, or prince, or state; but striving to get the mastery over them, in order to accomplish their subversion and ruin. Such are the fruits of intemperance.—From avarice, proceed rapine, parricide, sacrilege, poisonings, and such like enormities. The first step towards reformation must be to clear the forests where these savage passions are bred and nourished, by the most effective methods; and, having thus vindicated the rights of reason and humanity against these wicked propensities, our next aim should be to infuse something of a wholesome character in their stead into the soul. What you have learned, noble Hipparchus, with great pains and study, you have not maintained; having tasted Sicilian luxuries, which you ought not to have allowed yourself to taste a second time. It is currently reported that you have carried your philosophy abroad, a thing forbidden by Pythagoras, who, having committed his commentaries to the keeping of Damo, his daughter, enjoined her not to let them go forth out of his own family. She might have sold them for a large sum, but would not part with them. Poverty and obedience to her parent, were considered by her much more honourable than gold; and it is said, that at her death she left the same with a similar prohibition to her own daughter Bistalia. We men are less faithful to him, and transgress his rules, to which we have solemnly professed our adherence. If you are changed in this respect, I shall rejoice; but if otherwise, you are to me as one out of life.

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Theano is the name by some given to the wife of Pythagoras, and by others to his daughter. It may be that he had both a wife and daughter of that name. In the heading of the letter which follows, Theano is introduced as the person who was called the daughter of Pythagorean wisdom, ἡ τῆς Πυθαγορείου σοφίας θυγάτηρ. Her letter is to a friend named Eubula, on the education of her children.



## THEANO TO EUDULA, ON THE EDUCATION OF HER CHILDREN.

I HEAR you bring up your children in a delicate manner. But let me remind you, that it is the duty of a mother not to educate her offspring in habits of pleasure and indulgence, but to give them the discipline which will lead them to that which is good and wise. See that you do not act the part of one that rather flatters than loves them. When pleasure becomes part of the education of children, it is sure to render them ungovernable. Nothing is more pleasing to children than habitual indulgence; wherefore, my dear friend, have a special care not to convert your nursery into a place rather of seduction than education. Nature is seduced and perverted when the will and senses become devoted to pleasure; the mind is thereby rendered incapable of effort, and the body is enfeebled.

Children should be seasoned by rough and laborious exercises for the sorrows and conflicts of life, that they may not be the slaves of accidents and impressions, charmed with whatever flatters the sense, and frightened by every call to exertion; but, on the contrary, may learn to honour virtue above all things, abstaining from pleasure, and resting on what is good and profitable. Neither ought they to be suffered to eat to satiety, to be expensively amused, to be licentious in their sports, to say what they please, or to choose their own pursuits.

I am informed that if they cry you are full of fears, and are ambitious to change their tears into laughter, and even if they strike their nurse, or use violent language towards yourself, that you only smile;—that your study is how to keep them cool in the summer heat, and warm in the winter's frost; and to surround them with all those indulgences which poor children know nothing of, and without which they are as well nourished, grow as well, and enjoy a firmer constitution and better health. You seem to bring up your children as if they were the progeny of Sardanapalus, dissolving by effemi-

the breeding the proper nature of the other sex. What can be done with a child who if he has not his food brought him immediately sets up a cry; and when the time for his meal arrives is only content with what solicits the palate; is overcome with a little heat, trembles with a little cold, spurns at reproof, is impatient of denial, must have dainties, or is mightily offended; delights in wickedness, and carries his effeminate selfishness into everything he says and does? But, my dear friend, knowing, as you well do, that children brought up in these habits of softness and self-indulgence, when they come to man's estate, are in a condition of miserable slavery; withhold from them, I entreat you, these allurements, and, conducting their education on strict and austere, instead of these enervating principles, accustom them to endure hunger and thirst, cold and heat, and to comport themselves with modest shame before their equals and their seniors. Thus taught and bred up, they will become noble and ingenuous in their minds and manners, in the seasons both of study and relaxation. It is labour, my dear friend, which prepares the minds of boys for the highest attainments; by which process, when properly prepared, they will the more readily take the dye and tincture of virtuous principles. Wherefore I pray you to be very careful lest as vines badly trained are destitute of fruit, so your children, in consequence of their bad education, may yield only the useless products of a perverse cultivation.

THEANO TO NICOSTRATA, CONSOLING HER UNDER THE ILL-  
USAGE OF HER HUSBAND, AND RECOMMENDING THE  
PROPER CONDUCT TO BE OBSERVED TOWARDS HIM.

THE report has reached me of the insane behaviour of your misguided husband, that he has formed a disgraceful intimacy, and that you are inflamed with jealousy. My dear friend, many similar cases have come to my knowledge. Men are, as it seems, taken captive by women of this character,—are kept in chains by them, and robbed of all sense and prudence.

You, it seems, give yourself up to sorrow ; have no rest day or night ; your despondency almost deprives you of your reason ; and you are only occupied in schemes of vengeance. But do not thus, my dear friend. The province of a wife is not to watch over her husband, but to be obedient to him ; and this duty of obedience calls upon her to bear his follies with patience. His present connexion has no tie but pleasure, but his engagement to his wife is grounded on the value of her services ; and her prudence consists in her care not to mix fresh evil with what is already evil enough, nor to heap folly upon folly. For there are certain delinquencies which are aggravated by reproaches, but which, if rebuked only by silence, cease of themselves. Thus a fire goes out by being undisturbed. If your husband is desirous of doing what is wrong without your knowledge, and you withdraw the veil with which he covers his trespass, he will soon openly transgress. Do not let it appear that all you value in your husband is his attachment, but rather expect your happiness from his integrity, for this forms the grace of the conjugal union.

Of this be sure that to the person who has seduced his affections, he betakes himself only when impelled by his evil passions ; but that it is for the comfort of companionship that he returns to your society. While his grosser nature leads him to her, his correcter feelings and better reason give you the preference in his mind : the season of illicit pleasure is brief and transient ; satiety soon succeeds. No one but the desperately profligate can be long content with such company. What can be more vain than a cupidity that delights in doing wrong to itself ? It will be stopped, therefore, at some time or other, by being forced upon perceiving that it is throwing away character, while it is lessening the true enjoyment of life. No man in his senses will persist in a voluntary infiction on himself ; but, recalled at last by a perception of what is due to himself, and seeing how much his bad practices are reducing the stock of his real gratifications, he will begin to recognise your value ; and, unable to bear any longer the infamy of his own conduct, he will suddenly change his views and sentiments.

But let me entreat you, my dear friend, do not seek to regulate by adopting the manners of those who have drawn away your husband ; but rather seek to distinguish yourself in his eyes by the chaste propriety of your demeanour towards him, by your superintending care of his family, by your correct intercourse with his acquaintance, and by your tenderness towards his children. Do not even suffer yourself to be transported with jealousy towards her who has done you this injury. Such persons are not worth your attention, but let the whole bent of your mind be directed towards the virtuous ; and cherish always a disposition to peace and reconciliation, for these beautiful and gentle qualities compel the respect even of our enemies. Honour and esteem can only be the reward of uprightness. By this, a wife may acquire a power over her husband, and be held in honour, rather than in servitude by him. By this mode of reproving him, he will be the sooner put to shame, and will sooner seek to be reconciled. He will love you with the greater ardour by being rendered sensible of his injustice towards you, and by being taught to appreciate the integrity of your conduct, while at the same time he is made to apprehend the risk to which he has exposed himself of losing your affections.

The reconciliation of friends, when their differences are composed, resembles the delight produced by the cessation of corporal suffering. Endeavour to sympathise with him in all that befalls him. When he suffers from sickness, yours must be the suffering of mental disease ; if he sinks in his reputation, you must be content to fall with him ; if he does any thing to mar his fortune, it will become you to endure voluntarily the same privations : and thus you will show him that your union with him is complete ; so that to inflict pain upon him as the correction of his ill conduct, would be to inflict it upon your-

If you could resolve to separate yourself from your present husband, and make trial of another, that other might offend in the same way, and so might another still. Solitude would not suit a young temperament like yours. Are you prepared

to abjure the yoke altogether, and live a life of celibacy? Or will you adopt the desperate resolution of neglecting the management of your house, and thus ruin your husband? You will then be involved in the same condition of want and misery.

But will you take vengeance upon the unworthy seducer of your husband's affections? Depend upon it she will be on her guard, and will well observe your motions. And if you proceed to acts of open hostility, you will find that a female lost to shame is a desperate antagonist. Again, do you think it seemly to have daily contests with your husband? And what would be the advantage of this? Conflict and mutual reproaches will never bring back order and self-restraint, but will only widen the breach, and multiply the causes of irritation. What next? Will you consult how you may do him some harm? Far be this from you, dear friend. We are taught by the tragedy in which the crime of Medea is set forth in a sad story of woful incidents, to repress the risings of jealousy. As in a disease of the eyes we must keep our hands from touching them, so must you take care not to aggravate your wrongs by remonstrance and vindication. It is in patient endurance that you will find your most effectual relief.

THEANO TO CALLISTONA. ON THE GOVERNMENT  
OF SERVANTS.

To you, the juniors of our sex, is conceded the legitimate province of the government of a family, as soon as you enter into the state of matrimony. But instruction in this duty ought to proceed from those who from their age are more fit to furnish the rules of household economy: for it is highly becoming to commence our inquiry into those things with which we are unacquainted, as learners, and to place the highest value on the counsel of persons of age and experience. And really these things are very fit to engage the thoughts of a young lady, and to be made a part of her early education. To married ladies is committed the primary cares of the house,



and especially the regulation of the female servants:<sup>4</sup> and nothing more conduces to the good state of this department than benevolence. This object is not attained by the mere purchase of the persons of our servants, but is a posterior acquisition, resulting from the treatment of them by prudent mistresses. It is an advantage proceeding from the just use of the service of our domestics; not fatiguing them by the imposition of too much labour, nor suffering them to be weak, for want of due support. There are some who think it is their most gainful course, by oppressing their servants with toil, and affording them a scanty subsistence, to get what they can out of them, by hard treatment. Thus while they make by this miserable proceeding a few farthings profit, they are met by a malicious counteraction, much odium, and the most injurious conspiracies. But I would recommend to you to reward the daily labours of your servants, by measuring out their provisions in a just proportion to the products of their industry. But in cases of refractory behaviour, consult your own sense of duty, not their advantages. Servants should be respected and punished according to their deserts. But cruelty is followed by no satisfaction to the person who inflicts it, and reason is as much opposed as humanity to malice and oppression. But if servants are actuated by such an extraordinary measure of vice and profligacy as to be beyond correction, they must be got rid of. That which ceases to be of use, had better not be retained; but in such a proceeding act deliberately and with consultation, acquainting yourself well with the truth of the facts before you condemn, and the real amount of the delinquencies, that you may limit and proportion the punishment. It comports with the authority of a mistress to give sentence; it is a becoming act of grace and favour to remit the punishment of the offence. By a due regulation of yourself in these matters, you will maintain decorum and propriety in the manners of your household. Some mistresses, to gratify a cruel

<sup>4</sup> It must be remembered that these servants were slaves, either purchased or born in the house.

temper, inflict corporal chastisement on their servants, giving way to their anger and resentment, and being over severe in noting every transgression. Thus some servants are worn down by too lengthened employment; others seek their safety by absconding; some, to escape from their sufferings, have removed themselves by their own hands. And thus these mistresses having created a desert around them, have had abundant cause to repent of their violence and temerity. But, my dear friend, think of those instruments which, if their strings be too loose, send forth but a feeble sound, and if too much stretched, are broken. In the same manner it is with the government of servants; too much relaxation produces the dissonance of disobedience, but where severity is urged too far, nature herself gives way. In all things, moderation is the best and safest course.

MELISSA TO CLEARETA. ON FEMALE DRESS AND ATTIRE.

You appear, my friend, to be endowed by nature with many shining qualities; and I cannot but infer from the ardent desire you manifest to hear something on the proprieties of female dress and decoration, that you are anxious to increase in virtue as you grow in years. To begin then. It behoves a wise and well-educated woman to present herself to her lawful husband not richly but modestly adorned; in a dress more distinguished by its delicate whiteness and purity, than by its costliness and profusion. Those thin, transparent textures of purple, variegated with golden ornaments, ought to be rejected, as suitable only to those vicious characters who use them for the purpose of seduction. But that which most adorns a woman who seeks only to please and attract her husband, is her carriage and demeanour, and not her habiliments. It is the grace and honour of the married lady to please well her own husband, not to captivate the vulgar gaze. Let the blush upon your cheek, the sign of virtuous shame, serve in the place of paint; and modesty, propriety, and prudence, be substituted for gold and emerald. She that has a proper estimate of femi-

the modesty will find the beauty which she most delights in, not in the splendour of attire and ornament, but in the general regulations of her home, and in the happiness she imparts to her husband, by the faithful accomplishment of his wishes; for the will of the husband is the unwritten law by which the wife should govern herself, and to which her life should be conformed. She may take credit to herself for having brought with her the fairest and largest dowry in her habit and principle of obedience. It is to the beauty and wealth of the soul that we are to trust, rather than to the outward advantages of person or fortune: those are often the victims of disease or envy, but the wealth of the soul abides with us till death, firm and unmoveable.

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If the letters last above produced are received as the genuine products of the pens of the immediate scholars of Pythagoras, they must be admitted to bear very creditable testimony to the discipline of that ancient school; and as very curious and interesting specimens of the rules of society recognized amongst the most morally educated in the primitive times of heathen antiquity. But let us not be too charitable in giving all this credit to Pythagoras and his school. That Pythagoras borrowed the purest part of his moral philosophy from the Jewish church and Scriptures, is generally admitted by the best informed, or rather, it may be said, is proved by abundant testimonies; as will be seen by turning to the various passages to that effect produced by Theophilus Gale, in his *Court of the Gentiles*.<sup>5</sup> Amongst other authorities there relied on, that of Strabo is particularly strong, who relates of Pythagoras that he went into Judea, and for some time dwelt in Mount Carmel, where the priests shewed Pythagoras's walks, even in his time. Josephus also bears a like testimony, who, speaking of Pythagoras, gives it as his opinion that he was well acquainted with Jewish learning, and eagerly adopted many

<sup>5</sup> Part II. cap. v. sect. 2.

things belonging to it. That he was in Judea, and dwelt in Mount Carmel, is stated by Jamblicus, and also that he travelled twenty-two years in Egypt; and Archbishop Usher, in his *Annals* says, "It may be proved that Pythagoras conversed with the Jews at Babylon, forasmuch as he transferred many of their doctrines into his philosophy, as Hermippus declares in his *First Book of Things concerning Pythagoras*, cited by Josephus, and in his *First Book of Lawgivers*, cited by Cuzen; which is likewise confirmed by Aristobulus the Jew, a Peripatetic, in his first book to Philometer, who, moreover, was induced by the same reason to believe that the books of Moses were translated into the Greek tongue before the Persian empire; whereas it is much more probable that Pythagoras received that part of his learning from the conversation he had with the Hebrews."

The letter above produced as written by Lysis, one of the most celebrated scholars and auditors of Pythagoras, brings to view a leading characteristic of his discipline,—sequestration from the common intercourse of the world. It was the great rule of that sect to hold no communion or fellowship with any persons not initiated into the same, and regularly trained by the exercises and trials prescribed by its great founder, for arriving at that moral perfection and completeness in themselves, *αυταρχεια*, which he proposed to their attainment. And in this particular the College of Pythagoras seems to have copied the pattern of the sect of the Essenes among the Jews, separating themselves from the rest of mankind, whom they regarded as profane, and not to be admitted into their society.

The Pythagorean order and method of institution, and particularly the mode of receiving and preparing the candidates for reception into the Pythagorean college, is succinctly set forth in the eighth chapter of the first book of Aulus Gellius; wherein the attention paid to the carriage and physiognomy of the novice at his first introduction is singular and striking. "*Jam a principio adolescentes qui sese addiscendum obtulerant φυσιογνωμεναι.*"

The Pythagorean name and profession existed through

many ages, from the time of the great founder. In the time of the Emperor Adrian and the Antonines many adhered, ostensibly at least, to the rules and discipline of his severe institution. The sophists, especially, affected a great veneration for the mysteries and lofty claims of the Italic school; and it is not improbable that the letters handed down to us as having been written by the early scholars of Pythagoras, if not really the productions of those under whose names they have come to us, were composed by some sophist or sophists under the reigns of the philosophic emperors, when the maxims and doctrines of the Greek sage were in high reputation at court. By Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Antoninus, the Pythagorean *avtapeiria* was a dogma sure to be regarded with favour.

If these letters are to be considered as the productions of so late a period, we are not to wonder that the spirit of their contents has so lively and useful a bearing upon the duties and details of domestic life; since, after the communication of the light of the gospel, heathen philosophy involuntarily partook of its character; and sometimes, hardly conscious of the source of its amelioration, rose greatly above its own principles, and advanced new claims to respect, in ignorance of the grounds on which those claims properly rested. That the Stoics copied many Christian precepts into their own system of morality, no one can doubt, who gives due attention to the writings of Seneca or Marcus Antoninus.

That the Pythagorean schools were replenished from the same sacred fountains, is clearly seen in what issued from the pens of those sophists who taught at a later period in Alexandria and Rome, as adepts in the Italic philosophy; and who, if they were not strictly Pythagoreans, may at least be said to have Pythagorized with all the pretensions of that proud sect. This will more plainly appear, if a comparison be made between the early professors of the Pythagorean discipline and those who, closing the long retinue of the great founder, flourished in the dawn of the Christian day. Numerous fragments of the Pythagoreans are preserved in the collections of Stobæus and others; and those which are given



us at the end of Gale's *Opuscula* are interesting and valuable; but it may be doubted whether any of the philosophers whose moral sentences are there produced, except Secundus, who certainly lived under the reign of Adrian, were existing after the commencement of our Lord's ministry. Sextus, or Sextius, called the Pythagorean, has been thought by some to have been the person named by Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Antoninus, among those to whom he was indebted for their advice and instruction in his youth. If the same was the Sextus whose *Enchiridion* of instructive maxims appears in the dress given it in the Latin translation of Ruffinus, he was certainly one of those heathen philosophers whose writings owed much to Gospel morality; though it must be confessed that the passages principally so characterised have been suspected to be the interpolations of the translator.

The probability is, that the preceptor and friend of Marcus was not the author of the sentences alluded to, but another Sextus, who lived in the time of Julius Cæsar and the beginning of the reign of Augustus, and of whom Seneca, in *Epist.* lxi. makes such honourable mention. If the Sextus of Marcus Antoninus was really the author of the *Enchiridion* in question, and of the particular sentences to which allusion has been made, the Christian, with the book of God in his hand, must read them with great interest, as one among the most striking instances of the furtive intermixture of its holy precepts with the dogmas and aphorisms of heathen wisdom.

\* Thus, for example, we find among the sentences of Sextus, the Pythagorean, the following, which, if Sextus gave them to his scholars, Sextus, it would seem, must himself have gone for them to school to Him who taught no never man taught. *Dignus esto eo, qui te dignatus est filium dicere, et agere omnia ut filius Dei.* 1 Cor. vi. 17, 18; Rom. viii. 14, 16, 17, 21. *Corpus quidem tuum incedat in terra, anima autem semper sit apud Deum.* Col. iii. 2, 3; Phil. iii. 20. *Ver castus et sine peccato potestatem accepit a Deo esse filius Dei.* John i. 12. *Nequaquam latebit Deum, agens injuste sed nec cogitans quidem.* Heb. iv. 12, 13. *Quot vitæ habet anima, tot et dolores.* John viii. 34; Rom. vi. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. *Quod Deus tibi dedit nullus auferre potest.* John xvi. 22. *Non cibi qui per os inferuntur polluent hominem, sed ea quæ ex malis actibus proferuntur.* Matt. xv. 17, et seq. *Id*

quod bene agis autorem esse deputa Deum. 2 Cor. iii. 5; Phil. iv. 13; xv. 5. Mali nullius autor est Deus. Quod pati non vis ab alio, id facias. Matt. vii. 12. Cum præses hominibus memento quod et tibi Deus. Eph. vi. 9; Col. iv. 1. Nefas est Deum patrem invocare, et inhonestum agere. Luke vi. 46; John xiv. 11, 12. Liber eris ab omni cum Deo servieris. 1 Cor. vii. 22; Rom. vi. 22. Solent homines adire aliqua membrorum suorum pro sanitate reliquorum; quanto utilius pro pudicitia fiet? Matt. v. 29. Sermo verus de Deo, sermo verus. Matt. xi. 27. Omnem magis causam refer ad Deum. Phil. iv. 6; v. 7. Quicunque dat mundus, nemo firmiter tenet. John xiv. 27; vi. 19. Divina sapientia vera est scientia. 2 Cor. ii. 6, et seq.; James i. 3; 1 Thess. iii. 13. Cor diligentis Deum in manu Dei stabilitum est. 1 Cor. xiv. 18. Si non diligis Deum non ibis ad Deum. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SPURIOUS GREEK EPISTLES.

THE letters which have been ascribed to Themistocles were first printed at Rome, in the year 1626, from a MS. in the Vatican. They were suspected to be a forgery by some, but by many they appear to have been taken upon trust as genuine productions. They all bear date posterior to his banishment, and none have been produced as having been written before that time. Thus though all such as may be supposed to have been written when they might reasonably be expected to have been preserved, have been lost; yet a regular series has been handed down as coming from the distant places<sup>1</sup> to which the general had repaired during his exile. These letters are in number twenty-one; and among them is a letter to Pausanias, before the discovery of that Spartan's traitorous correspondence with the Persian power. There are also other letters from Themistocles to the same person after the detection of the conspiracy; whereas, it appears from Diodorus, that Pausanias was put to death six years before the exile of the Athenian.

The epistles of Socrates<sup>2</sup> and his scholars, Xenophon, Aristippus, and others, were collected and published by the celebrated Leo Allatius, having been found in a MS. in the Vatican. They were printed in the year 1637. They have decided marks of their spurious origin, notwithstanding all the efforts of the editor, in his elaborate introduction, to establish their legi-

<sup>1</sup> Argos, Corcyra, Epirus, Epheus, Magnesia.

<sup>2</sup> Rulinkemus, in his "Annotations to the Memorabilia," considers these Socratical epistles as decidedly fictitious, (ad lib. i. 11, 48, 60.) And it is not a little strange to find so acute a critic as Valekenaeus quoting from them as if they were genuine. See his note concerning the title of the work above alluded to.

smacy. The correspondence of Socrates with the king of Macedon has the air of puerile romance. In another letter which the great philosopher is supposed to write to one of those who had fled with Thrasybulus from the violence of the thirty tyrants, he is made to give an account of the state of Athens since their departure. He relates the death of Leon, and the transactions in which he was engaged; which Leon, and after him Theramenes, were both sacrificed before the flight of Thrasybulus, with his companions, to Thebes. In a letter from one of the scholars of Socrates, it is stated, that the Athenians put to death both Anytus and Miletus, the prosecutors of Socrates; whereas the two facts are well authenticated that Miletus was killed, but that Anytus was banished. In one of these letters Xenophon invites some friends to come to see him at his plantation near Olympia, informing them that Aristippus and Phædo had been visiting him there, to whom he had been reciting his memoirs of Socrates, which both had approved of; whereas this Aristippus was always on the worst terms with Xenophon, and could hardly have given his approbation to a book which, as Dr. Bentley observes, was a satire against himself. The letters abound in errors and anachronisms, which the great critic has well exposed. And the subjects of the correspondence, as well as its tone and character, very decisively betray the imposture.

Aristippus, in a letter to his daughter, tells her that, in case of his death, it was his wish that she should go to Athens and live with Myrto and Xantippe, the two wives of Socrates. And this may be considered as among the plainest evidences of the spurious origin of the epistles. There was a tradition that the great philosopher had two wives, which had its foundation in the supposed testimony of Aristotle, in his book *περί ευγενίας*, concerning Nobility. But Plutarch suspects that book to be spurious; and it is observable that neither Plato nor Xenophon makes any mention of Myrto. Polygamy being against the law of the commonwealth, Hieronymus Rhodius sets up a statute, made in the days of Socrates, authorising, on account of the scarcity of the people, marriage

with two women at one time. But as no mention is made of this statute by any other author, and there is little intelligence in the provisions of it, Dr. Bentley seems to have very reasonable ground for supposing it to have been the offspring of invention, for supporting the story of the two wives. In the same collection of letters, too, there are some which suppose Socrates to have but one wife; and Xenophon, in a kind letter to Xantippe, in which he makes much of her and her little ones, says not a word about the other wife.

It is from Xenophon that we have this ill report of the temper and behaviour of Xantippe, so that he must have played a very double part, if while he was writing this complimentary epistle to the lady, he was traducing her in the accounts he was preparing for posterity. It seems that it was only from him that Xantippe had the character of scold assigned her, as Plato and the other Socratics are silent on this head. In the ridicule which was aimed at Socrates by the comedians, his scolding wife is never alluded to; and Athenæus suspects the whole to have been a calumny. The letter from Xenophon to Xantippe is as follows:

XENOPHON TO XANTIPPE, SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN A  
LITTLE TIME AFTER THE DEATH OF SOCRATES.

I HAVE committed to the hands of Euphron, the Megarite, six small measures of wheaten cakes, and eight drachms, also a new cloak for winter wear. Accept these trifles, and be assured that Euclid and Terpsion are very good and worthy persons, full of kind feelings towards you, and of respect to the memory of Socrates. When the children shew an inclination to come to us, do not oppose their wishes, as it is but a little way for them to come to Megara. My good lady, let the abundance of the tears you have shed, suffice. To mourn longer will do no good, but rather harm. Remember what Socrates said, and endeavour to follow his precepts and counsels. By incessant grief, you will greatly injure yourself and the children. These are young Socrateses, and it not only becomes us to support them



while we live, but to endeavour to continue in life for their sakes. Since if you, or I, or any other who feels a tender concern for the children of the deceased Socrates, should die, they will suffer loss by being deprived of a protector, and a contributor to their support and subsistence. Wherefore try to live for these children; which can only be done by attending to the means of preserving your life. But grief is among the things opposed to life, as those can testify who experience its hurtful effects. The gentle Apollodorus, for so he is called, and Dion, give you praise for not receiving assistance from any body standing in no particular relation to you. You say you abound, and you are much to be commended for so speaking of yourself: as far as I and your other intimate friends are able to assist you, you shall feel no want. Take courage then, Xantippe, and let none of the good instructions of Socrates be lost, for you know in what honour that great man was held by us; and consider well the example he has left us by his death. For my own part, I really think his death was a great benefit to us all, if it be regarded in the light in which it ought to be.<sup>2</sup>

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Five epistles have come down to us as having been written by Euripides, and these were said by Apollonides, who wrote a treatise on false history, to have been forged by Sabirius Pollo, "the same who counterfeited the letters of Aratus." The Greek Professor at Cambridge, Dr. Joshua Barnes, who produced an edition of the works of Euripides, seemed to have the fullest conviction of the genuineness of these letters; but Dr. Bentley has added his weighty opinion to that of Apollonides, to throw an entire discredit upon them. Every letter seems to contain the matter of its own detection and ex-

<sup>2</sup> Xenophon's return from his Asiatic expedition was not till some time after the death of Socrates, so that this letter could not have been written from Megara so recently after that event, as by the contents it would appear to have been. Nor does it seem probable that he was at Megara at all after his return, as he did not leave Agesilaus till he went to settle at Scyllum. (See Diog. Laert. ii. 52.)

posure; especially one of them, which is supposed to have been written from the court of Archelaus, king of Macedonia, in which, in answer to some reproaches which had been cast upon him for his going from Athens, he declares himself to pay no regard to what might be said of him at Athens by Agatho or Mesatus. Now this Agatho, unfortunately for the credit of Sabirius Pollo,<sup>3</sup> the inventor of the letters, was all this while himself at the court of Archelaus, with Euripides.<sup>4</sup> The injury done to Euripides by Cephisophon seems to have been unknown to or overlooked by the fabricator of these letters, when he addresses one of his letters to the person so named. Other inconsistencies, puerilities, and improbabilities, supply an internal evidence sufficiently strong to bring these letters of the tragic poet under a pretty decisive charge of forgery. The letters of Aratus are also considered as the invention of the same Sabirius Pollo; but they are not extant, so that no judgment can be formed of the credit due to them but what is affected by the suspicion suggested by the forgeries in such frequent practice by the sophists.

One of these sophists was doubtless the author of the collection given to the public under the name of Alciphron, who, some say, lived in some part of the fourth century; while others assign him a much earlier date, even anterior to Lucian, whom they charge with having borrowed from him without acknowledgment.<sup>5</sup> They are clearly supposititious and imitative epistles, intended to represent the manners of the Athenian Greeks in the most common intercourse of society, wherein parasites and courtizans make a prominent figure. The composition of the letters is not in bad Greek,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Bentley queries whether we should not read Sabinus or Sabidius Pollio; as there was no such Roman family as the Sabiri, or such a surname as Pollo.

<sup>4</sup> See *Ælian. Var. Hist.* l. ii. c. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Saxius places Alciphron between Lucian and Aristænetus; Lucian being the author, and Aristænetus the imitator of his diction. *Onomasticou.*

<sup>6</sup> There are several words occurring in Alciphron which are not to be found in ancient Greek writers, but clearly of modern adoption: as *εὐφημία*, pro laudatione; *ἐπιστοφίμν*, notionis coercendi; *προστυμῆσαι*, deditum, intentum esse.

and is sometimes characterised by a portion of wit and humour; but the topics are for the most part unimportant and uninteresting. It seems probable, however, that the writer had the means of acquainting himself with the tone and characteristics of the sort of intercourse supposed to be carried on by the correspondence which he exhibits. If we suppose these letters to present a pretty accurate picture of the manners and intercourse of the sort of persons between whom the correspondence is carried on, it would be injustice towards the character of the ancient Athenians to receive them as specimens generally applicable to that people. The parasites which these letters bring before us were characters in very low estimation. They were in remote times persons of some distinction, being invested with the office of superintending the public or rather the sacred granaries, where the corn was deposited for the sacrifices and services of the temple, and had the name given them in reference to that duty, being compounded of two terms, *παρά* and *στρος*, signifying their place to be near the corn. From this honourable station they sunk in later times to the low and illiberal condition of dependents and flatterers at the tables of the great, being probably so increased in number that the supernumeraries were obliged to look for subsistence where they could find it; or the name might be given in ridicule to such as were called in to assist at feasts and luxurious entertainments. The Romans, under the emperors, had also their parasites, but they appear nowhere in so base a plight as in these letters of Alciphron, and the pages of Athenæus. The plays of Menander were, no doubt, well furnished with these characters, from which Terence has transplanted them. Allusions to them are not unfrequent in Horace and Juvenal. But it is in Alciphron that we see the parasites in their most odious colours; and in connecting them with the ordinary train of Athenian entertainments, we cannot but suspect those entertainments to have been very deficient in dignity and decency. If the work exhibited to the world under the title of Alciphron's Letters, and the letters collected by Aldus Minutius and Leo Allatius, and others, could

be received as genuine, we should indeed have before us a very interesting display of manners and familiar intercourse among the best instructed as well as the most ignorant portions of society in ancient Greece; but the whole mass appears to be worthy of little credit. They can only be regarded as pictures of manners more or less representative of the originals, according to the distance of the times in which they were composed from the times to which they relate, or the powers of observation and discrimination exerted in the execution of the portraits. The reader will find Alciphron's letters among the Greek epistles printed by Aldus, who has collected a great body of letters in that language, imputed to thirty-five different authors: and though what he has produced in this department of learning is far from being genuine gold, the impressions are sometimes well executed, and worthy of being preserved as products of skill and ingenuity. As a compilation, they bear testimony to the industry of one who, under the patronage of Leo X. laboured with as much success as any in that age towards recovering and elucidating Greek literature, and promoting the objects of the celebrated Greek academy of Leo's institution: in all which valuable labour he gratefully acknowledges the zealous services of the learned Greeks whom the accomplished pontiff abovenamed had attracted to his court.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Leo X. Pontifex Romanus ipsam propemodum Græciam in Italiam quasi in novam Coloniam deduxit. Pueros enim ex tota Græcia, in quibus vis ingenti et bona indoles inesse videbatur, cum suis præceptoribus, Romanam evocavit; ut linguam Romanam suam ipsis commodius traderent, vicissimque suam illi Romanis. Morhofius in Polyhistor, l. iv. c. 6.

## CHAPTER IX.

### GENUINE HEATHEN GREEK EPISTLES.

THE Greek epistles of heathen writers, entitled to be regarded as genuine, which have come down to us, are, for the most part, studied and elaborate compositions, the vehicles of argument or disquisition on matters of general interest or contemplative enquiry. The number generally ascribed to Plato is thirteen :<sup>1</sup> but some assign two of the number to Dion—the first and the fifth; though the Aldine edition gives both to Plato. Part of one of them runs thus :

#### PLATO TO THE KINDRED AND ASSOCIATES OF DION.

I PERCEIVE by your letters that I am expected to give you credit for holding the same opinions as were entertained by Dion; and you exhort me to act in conjunction with you as

<sup>1</sup> *Επιστολαὶ ῥητικαί*, XIII. according to Fabricius—1. Dionis—2. and 3. Plato to Dionysius—4. to Dion—5. to Perdiccas—6. to Hermias, Erastus, and Coriscus—7 and 8. to the friends of Dion—9. to Archytas of Tarentum—10. to Aristodorus, or, according to Laertius, Aristodemus—11. to Leodamas—12. again to Archytas; and 13. to Dionysius. There appear to be three MSS. of Plato's epistles in the Vatican, of which the first has six epistles; the second, thirteen; and the third, fourteen. In the library of L. de Medici at Florence, there are two copies, one having eight and the other thirteen epistles. Suidas acknowledges thirteen under *Εὐπαρτίων*, which was the salutation used by Plato; while others used *χαίρειν*, or *γαθύν*, or *εὐδαιμον*, or *εὐλογεῖν*, &c. Some of these letters are mentioned by Laertius: 10. to Aristodemus, and 12. to Archytas. The third, to Dionysius, has been maintained by Bentley to be genuine; but Meinursius has declared not only that epistle, but all the rest, to be spurious "in judicio de quibusdam Socraticorum scriptis." See *Comment. Socrat. regie Gottingensis*, Ann. 1783, *Classis Histor. et Philolog.*—But Guil. Gottlieb Tennemar contra Meinursium disputans, has maintained the genuineness of the epistles, p. 17. et seq. though he doubts as to a part of Ep. 13. And Wesseling contends for the genuineness of the whole of Ep. 13. So that the reader must be left mainly to decide for himself from the internal evidence.



much as is possible in speech and action. Truly, if you have the same sentiments and objects which he had, I shall readily make a common cause with you. But if you have not, it will be necessary to deliberate frequently on the subject. What his thoughts and desires were, I can state to you clearly, not from conjecture, but from certain knowledge.

When I first came to Syracuse, being near forty years old, the age of Dion was the same as that of Hipparinus<sup>2</sup> is at present; and the opinion and views which he then entertained he persevered in to the end—that the Syracusans ought to be free, and governed by the best laws. So that it would not be matter of astonishment if some god had raised the thoughts of Dion into agreement with his own on the subject of government. But the circumstances which operated to bring this about are worthy of the attention of young and old. I will endeavour to relate the affair to you from the beginning, for the present state of things makes such an exposition seasonable.

When I was a young man, I partook of the feelings and aspirations common to that time of life. I determined as soon as I had the disposal of myself, to take a part in the public business of the city. In the mean time, public affairs were thrown into the following predicament. The existing polity being condemned by the greater part of the people, a change took place: fifty-one persons being chosen governors, eleven of them presided in the city, and ten in Piræus; and each of these had an active concern in the direction of the city business; but the remaining thirty were invested with supreme authority.

Some of these rulers being of my particular acquaintance, called on me to give my attention to public affairs as a study for which I was well fitted. This invitation touched and interested me, as it was natural it should, considering my youth. I thought it properly belonged to *them* to govern the city, so as to lead it from its actual state of immorality to habits of probity and virtue; and to *me* diligently to attend to the course of their proceedings. But the conduct of these men soon convinced me that the former polity, bad as it was, was a golden period

<sup>2</sup> Son of Dion.

in comparison with that which they were instituting: for in addition to their other numerous instances of iniquitous government, they sent my venerable friend Socrates, and who, I do not hesitate to say, was the most upright person of the time, together with certain others, to bring back by force one of the citizens who had withdrawn himself from their tyranny, that he might be punished with death; hoping thus to implicate Socrates with them in the conduct of affairs, whether he were willing or not. He refused, however, to comply, and determined to expose himself to every danger, rather than be a partaker of their infamous proceedings. All which, and other transactions of a similar character, filled me with indignation, and determined me to withdraw myself from the evil men of that time.

Not long after this the thirty tyrants were made an end of, and the whole of the then existing polity was subverted. Again, therefore, I was induced to engage in political affairs, though with less devotion to them than before. But many circumstances occurred, from the disordered state in which things still remained, to excite one's honest indignation. It was not to be wondered at that, in times so disturbed by changes, those that were opposed to the existing authorities should be punished with more than due severity; although, it must be admitted that those who returned to their obedience to the state experienced a very equitable treatment. It so happened that certain persons invested with authority brought our friend Socrates into a court of justice, on a charge of great impiety,—an accusation which Socrates, of all men, the least merited. Some led him along as an impious person, while others gave sentence against him, and condemned him to death. Thus they destroyed a man, who, blameless in all other respects, had refused to concur in the infamous proceeding towards one of those who had fled from his oppressors. When I perceived how things were going on, and who had the power of controlling and influencing the laws and manners of the state and people, I felt, as I grew in years and experience, more and more the difficulty of intermeddling with effect in the controul and conduct of public administra-

tions ; and I saw it to be wholly impossible to be done without the co-operation of faithful friends and associates, whom at that time it was not easy to find ; for our city was then no longer governed in accordance with the manners and habits of our fathers, and it was not possible with any ease or satisfaction of mind to conform one's self to those of recent institution. The letter as well as the spirit of the old laws were totally corrupted. It might seem not a little wonderful that I, who was at first so ardently desirous of engaging in public business, when I beheld all things running into disorder, should so soon be disheartened. I did not, however, withdraw my attention from them, but determined to observe their course, to see whether some improvement might not take place in them, and in the entire polity respecting them, and still to wait a fit opportunity of acting. At length I became satisfied that all the states then existing were badly governed : and that as to their laws, and the administration of them, matters were not within the reach of remedy, unless some fundamental plan of amelioration could be adopted, seconded by some accompanying good fortune. It is a tribute due to sound philosophy to declare my conviction that it is from its teaching only that we can be instructed in the management either of our public or private affairs. Hence we may rest in the proposition, that humanity will continue to suffer under the evils of misgovernment till either the philosophic portion of society are invested with the management of all political affairs, or those who are in the actual management, by some divine influence on their dispositions, are made to cultivate philosophy. With these impressions, I first travelled to Italy and Sicily.

On my arrival in those countries, I was soon dissatisfied with the opinions there entertained of what constitutes a happy life, which was thought to consist in repletion twice a day, and in all the sensualities in which the vicious and voluptuous place their enjoyment. I was dissatisfied with these manners and habits, because I was well aware that no man under heaven educated in them, could ever attain to wisdom, self-control, or any estimable qualities, however admirable his

of most good to mankind; not knowing that I was preparing the way for the dissolution of the existing my. Dion was very docile, as in general matters, so also in matters treated of in my discourses. He so accurately comprehended and so zealously attended to my teaching, that he surpassed in this respect all the young men with whom we ever been acquainted. He determined to pass the remainder of his life in a manner very different from the usual way of the Italians and Sicilians,—in cultivating virtue rather than luxury and pleasure. For this reason he was an object of aversion to those who had conformed their lives to the usual institutions.

Some time after this he perceived that his sentiments, the fruit of sound instruction, were shared by other persons, not a very numerous class, among whom was Dionysius the younger. He had hopes, too, that if this disposition should spread, both his own life and that of the Syracusans in general would be greatly more happy. On this account he thought I ought to come to Syracuse with the utmost celerity, that I might promote these good beginnings; remembering that easily by my conversation he was inflamed with the desire of leading a life the best and most becoming. If he could kindle this desire in Dionysius, as he was attempting to do, he hoped to render life happy throughout Syracuse, exposed to the calamities and outrages which then prevailed. Dion being persuaded of these things, prevailed upon Dionysius to send for me, and himself requested that I would by all means come with the greatest speed, before certain other persons associating with Dionysius might seduce him to a course of life so worthy of his preference. "Why," he said, "should we wait for a better opportunity than that which now presents itself to us, under a certain divine guid-

ance?" He, likewise, reminded me of the political state of Italy and Sicily, the ascendancy of Dionysius, his vigorous age, and his vehement desire to advance in learning and philosophy. He informed me how much inclined his own kindred and friends were to the principles and conduct which I inculcated and enforced; and that he was not by himself sufficient to make Dionysius decidedly embrace them. He added that now was the time, if ever, which encouraged a hope that the persons so disposed as before mentioned, would in course of time become philosophers, and rulers of states made powerful by wise government. With these and other like arguments he urged me to comply with his request. But I was distrustful of the result, as young men are hasty, and are often borne along by the feelings of the moment in a direction contrary to their better judgments.

I knew, however, that the disposition of Dion himself was naturally grave, and that he was of an age sufficiently ripe for these undertakings. After some doubt and deliberation, I came to the resolution that I ought to go, being persuaded that a sincere intention to aid in establishing a perfect system of legislation and polity, could never be furnished with a fitter time for making the experiment. I considered, indeed, that there was one person whom if I could bring over to my scheme, I should accomplish all the good in my contemplation. With these views and in this confidence, and not from any such motives as have been imputed to me, I left my home. I felt how much I should sink in self respect, if I should appear to myself to be nothing more than a man of words, never accomplishing any practical good. I was fearful, too, lest the hospitality and friendship of Dion should expose him to danger; who, if he should fall into any calamity, or be banished by Dionysius, would naturally fly hither, and thus address me:

"I come to you, O Plato, an exile, though wanting neither horses nor soldiers to oppose my enemies, but wanting words, and the power of persuasion, which I know form your great qualification for converting young men to the



principles and practice of justice and probity, and uniting in a virtuous fellowship and friendship with each other; our deficiency in the proper use and application of those

has occasioned me to leave Syracuse, and to come

As to what relates to myself, indeed, this will bring me disgrace, but as to the credit of that philosophy you are in the habit of exalting so high, and which I complain is dishonoured by other men, are you not now of betraying it as well as me? Surely, if we had inhabitants of Megara, you would have come to my aid upon being called, or I should have looked upon you as one of all men the most depraved; and now you seek an excuse in the length and labour of the journey; but you mustake in supposing that this excuse will save you disgrace."

Dion had thus addressed me, I should certainly have been at a loss for a becoming answer. I therefore came to me, in compliance with these arguments from reason and justice, leaving my own occupations which I was justified in pursuing under a tyranny to which neither my habits nor my principles I professed and taught were reconcilable. But when I came thither, I maintained the freedom of my mind, observant both of the claims of hospitality and the duty of the philosopher. The destiny which had placed me in the court of Dionysius, would have entailed disgrace upon me if I had been in any respects compliant, effeminate, or

On my arrival, I found all things about Dionysius in a state of sedition, and many calumnies afloat concerning the ambitious projects of Dion. I defended Dion to the utmost of my power; but was able to effect but little, for in the fourth month after my arrival, Dionysius accused Dion of treasonable plots to usurp the throne of Syracuse, and to his disgrace had him conveyed into exile in a small vessel. At this, all of us who were the friends of Dion were apprehensive that Dionysius would accuse us of being conspirators against Dion. It was even reported in Syracuse that I was to die by the tyrant, as the cause of everything that

had happened. But Dionysius perceiving our alarms, and dreading some consequences from them injurious to himself, received us all very encouragingly, and me especially he desired to confide in him, requesting that I would by all means remain with him, as my continuing in Syracuse might be of advantage to him. He, therefore, importuned me to stay; induced to make this request, no doubt, by some necessity or interest of his own, which are the selfish motives by which tyrants are usually actuated. With a view to prevent my departure, he compelled me to reside in the Acropolis from which place it was impossible for any master of a vessel to take me away without the tyrant's order. Nor was there any merchant or magistrate who, on seeing me leaving the country, would not immediately have brought me back to Dionysius; since the general understanding now was, that the tyrant had conceived a wonderful affection for me. And if the truth be spoken, I do believe this was the case. But the terms I was expected to be on with him, were that I was to praise him more, and regard him as more my friend, than Dion. This relation between us he took wonderful pains to establish. He neglected, however, the honourable means of effecting his purpose, if it could have been effected, by cultivating a familiar companionship with me, and by attending to my discourses and philosophical instructions. This he seemed fearful of doing, lest, as was told him by my calumniators, he should be impeded in his designs, and Dion should attain to the chief management of the state. However, he endured everything, still holding the opinions which I brought with me to Syracuse, and resolved to try if by any means Dionysius could be induced to live the life of a lover of wisdom. But he resisted, and rendered ineffectual all my endeavours. Such are the particulars of my first visit to Sicily, and of my conduct in that country.

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Of the ten epistles which are included in the published works of Isocrates, that which is addressed to Dionysius, and

is the tenth in order, is clearly a fabrication, though it found a place in the editions of Vossius, Stephanus, Aldus;—the other nine have every appearance of being genuine, and do not seem to be suspected by the learned. As the epistles of Isocrates are among the few Greek specimens of letter-writing which have come down to us with an accession that entitles them to be received as genuine productions, two of them shall be here presented in an English

ISOCRATES TO ALEXANDER (SON OF PHILIP OF MACEDON).

In writing to your father, I should feel myself guilty of indiscretion were I neither to address or notice you in any manner, living as you do with your father; if it were to prevent those who know me not, from supposing that I was enfeebled, if not entirely robbed of my understanding. Whereas the truth is, that the faculties which, notwithstanding the decay of my strength, yet remain with me are not unworthy of the character I sustained when in the prime of my age. I hear from all that you are a lover of mankind, a lover of Athens, and a lover of wisdom; not being an idle and foolish, but a prudent and intelligent man: that you do not bestow your regard upon such of our countrymen as have no concern for their own solid interests, but turn themselves up to their evil propensities, but upon those to whom the strictest intercourse and communion imparts no hurt or injury to the principles of their associates, and to whom the wise may approach without endangering their own safety: and that of the various philosophies you do not neglect that which belongs to dialectics and disputation; but give it its due weight and importance in the intercourse of private life, though you do not consider it as a befitting study for those who are set over the people, or have the charge of a monarchical government. It is a study, in your opinion, suitable to persons whose thoughts and purposes raise them above ordinary men; who ought not to expend their

strength in controversies with the citizens, or to afford others the opportunity or licence of contradiction. In this sort of exercitation, it seems, you take no delight; but you prefer the study and cultivation of eloquence, especially that which is conversant with topics of daily agitation, and which we employ in our public deliberations, and by the aid of which you becomingly impress upon those who are subject to your command how to demean themselves, and how to make just distinctions between what is fair and honourable, and what is of a contrary character; giving encouragement or reproof, as the several cases may seem to call for the one or the other. As long as you are occupied with these objects, you give proof of your wisdom. It is thus that you inspire confidence into your father and others, that as you advance in years, you will be more and more confirmed in these principles, excelling others in understanding, as your father has surpassed all in greatness.

ISOCRATES TO THE SONS<sup>1</sup> OF JASON, (LATE SOVEREIGN OF PHERÆ IN THESSALY,) DISSUADING THEM FROM ASSAULTING EMPIRE.

ONE of those persons who were sent ambassadors to inform me that, being called by you aside from the others, he was asked if I could be persuaded to leave my own country and sojourn with you. Impressed with the memory of the hospitality of Jason and Polyaces, I should gladly comply with you; for I know that such intercourse would be profitable to all of us. But many considerations stand in the way of my wishes; principally my inability to make journeys. And indeed, it is hardly consistent with the age at which I have arrived, to travel into foreign countries. Furthermore it seems to me, that all who should hear of my wandering about would form an unfavourable opinion of me, if, after having spent my life cultivated repose and quiet, I should undertake long journeys in my old age, when, if I had passed my time abroad,

<sup>1</sup> They had been disciples of Isocrates.

I would have been proper and becoming to end my days at home. Add to this, I am really afraid of the changes which may happen in my own city. For I must be plain : I perceive that all the alliances which are formed with us are soon dissolved. And if this should happen with respect to yourselves, how should I be able to keep clear of the imputation of crime, and avoid other perils? Ought I not to feel ashamed if, in behalf of my own city, I should appear to sacrifice my engagements with you, or, for the sake of my engagements with you, to forget my duty to my own city? These interests being opposed, I do not know how I should be able to acquit myself satisfactorily towards both.

These considerations have convinced me that it is not in my power to do what I could wish. But I do not feel that it is becoming in me to dwell so upon my own concerns as to leave yours unattended to. The matters, therefore, which were the topics of my discourse when in your company, I will endeavour as well as I can to discuss in correspondence with you. And do not suppose that in writing this letter to you, I am influenced by ostentation rather than friendship. I have not yet become so foolish as not to know that I am not now qualified to write better than when in the flower of my age. I am fully aware that by sending forth inferior performances I shall only write to sink below the reputation I at present enjoy. Again, if vanity, rather than affection, were my motive in writing, I should not have chosen a subject so easy to say something to the purpose upon, but I could have adopted others more showy and fertile in argument. Indeed, formerly, I never sought distinction by handling such subjects, my object being rather to treat of those which had been overlooked by others. Nor have I now intruded myself into your concerns with any design to shew how I can treat of these matters, but, perceiving you to have at this time many anxious affairs to conduct, I am desirous of declaring to you my opinion concerning them. I think, indeed, that mine is the properest period for giving counsel. Old age is taught by experience, and thereby qualified to point out what is best to be done in difficult circumstances, such as those in which you



are now placed; though I grant mine is not the age for treating any subject gracefully, scientifically, and elaborately. I shall be content, therefore, if I can discourse on the matter in hand in a coherent and connected manner.

Do not be surprised if I seem to be repeating what you have heard before from me. Some things before urged by me have again spontaneously presented themselves; other things I shall purposely make use of again as best for my purpose. It would be folly in me if, when I perceive other men adopting my arguments, I should think myself not at liberty to make a fresh use of them myself. I have prefaced what I have to say with this apology, because the very first observation I shall make will be one of the most trite and familiar. I have been accustomed to say to those who have attended my lectures, that their primary object should be to consider well what they proposed to themselves to effect by their speeches, and how best to divide and arrange their subjects. And when they shall have with the greatest care determined this point, I have been used to tell them they must search for the ideas best calculated to promote their final purpose. This has been my great dogma on the subject of oratory. But it is equally a fundamental consideration in the conduct of those other matters in which you are at present engaged: for nothing can be done correctly, unless you first consider and decide on what plan you mean to regulate your life for the time to come, and what glory you will aspire to; whether that which comes from willing or from unwilling minds. Having decided these points, the next thing you will have to do will be to consider seriously how the actions of each day may be made to conspire to the accomplishment of what has been your aim and purpose from the beginning. And by this mode of enquiring and reasoning, you will have before you a determinate object, and a great and beneficial scope to which the faculties of the soul may be directed. If you lay down no plan of life, but submit yourself to the guidance of events, you will be always rambling and unsteady in your resolves, and meet with many failures.

Possibly some of those who have chosen to live a careless

will affect to ridicule such reasonings. They may say, that I ought to ground myself upon some certain principles. I will, therefore, without more delay, explicitly declare my sentiments. In plain terms, then, it seems to me that the lives of private men are greatly more happy than the lives of sovereigns. I esteem the honour which men of elevated thoughts confer by their applause, to be far more gratifying than what is received from men living under the sway of tyrants. I am aware that I shall have many opposed to me in sentiment, especially those by whom you are surrounded: I doubt not they will to their utmost urge you to take care upon you. But they have narrow views of the subject, and yield themselves to the delusion of a selfish ambition. They are looking to power, gain, and pleasure, with a full expectation of enjoying them. But the troubles, fears, and anxieties which beset those who govern, and their adherents, they entirely overlook. They do not see that they expose themselves to the same hazards and evils to which they are subject who are guilty of the basest and most criminal actions. It is not that those persons are wholly ignorant of the evils attendant upon their situations, but they persuade themselves that they shall extract all the good, and avoid all the dangers and misfortunes which are incident to this condition: and they think they can so order things as to place themselves out of the reach of danger, in near connexion with every advantage. When men think and act in this way, I grudge them the security in which they are placed. Indeed, I should feel myself disgraced, if, when setting myself up as an adviser of others, I should neglect theirs for my own private interest, and not rather, putting myself aside, and all considerations of personal advantage, give them the best advice which it is in my power to afford them. Since, therefore, these are my sentiments, I expect to be listened to by your favour and attention.

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In Herodotus and Thucydides we find letters attributed to generals and other great characters, which their histories

present to us; and these letters are the more interesting, as they are characteristically interwoven with the sequel and conduct of the narrative. They may not have been the identical letters written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, but they must, nevertheless, be considered as specimens of letter-writing in the days of the historians themselves; and being part of the *res gestæ* belonging to the portions of history in progress under their pens, they would naturally keep us close to the truth as their means and opportunities would enable them.

Polycrates, to whom the two following letters, given us by Herodotus, were written, is said to have lived to the year 522 B.C.; having governed Samos about forty-two years. According to the accounts which have come down to us, he was remarkable for the constant current of prosperity which attended him, till he was treacherously put to death by Oroetes, the Persian governor of Magnesia, on the Mæander. Amasis, the king of Egypt, whose fortunes were also remarkable, having risen from the condition of a common soldier to the throne of Egypt, on which he sat forty-four years, was so convinced that the uniform felicity of Polycrates must at last terminate in some signal calamity, that he is said to have advised him to anticipate the turn of his fortune by bringing some loss or trouble upon himself. Polycrates, following this advice, threw one of his most precious jewels into the sea; but after a few days of regret he received a present of a fish, in which was found the jewel so much esteemed by him. He was at length invited to Magnesia by Oroetes, and on his arrival put to death by his order, from no other motive, as was said, but the desire of terminating the career of his envied felicity.

“Amasis saith thus to Polycrates (Ἀμασις Πολυκράτει ὥδε λέγει):—It is, indeed, very gratifying to hear of the prosperity of a friend, but your great successes do not altogether please me, knowing, as I do, the envy of the gods; and I cannot but wish, both for myself and for those I love, that their prosperous and adverse fortunes should be interchanged. I desire my life to be chequered with good and evil, rather than

to be uniformly successful: for never have I heard of a man with whom all things for a length of time have prospered, that has not at last come to a ruinous and disastrous end. Be guided then by me, and deal thus with your good fortune. Consider what is that thing now in your possession which you deem to be most precious, the loss of which would most afflict your mind; cast it so effectually away from you, that it may be seen of men no more. But if there should not after this succeed a course of good fortune to the misfortune thus voluntarily endured, and so interchangeably, for the future, pursue the remedy which I propose."<sup>4</sup>

The epistle of Orætes is in these terms:—"Orætes saith thus to Polycrates (Ὀραιτης Πολυκράτει ὡδε λέγει): I understand that you are projecting great things, and that you have not money to carry them into execution. Now, if you will act as I suggest, you will establish yourself and save me. For the king, Cambyses, is plotting my destruction, as I am certainly informed. Do you, therefore, transport me and my substance from this place; and then take part of that same substance for your own, and suffer me to enjoy the rest. With such means you may acquire the empire of all Greece. But if you mistrust what I say concerning my wealth, send to me some one in whom you place confidence, and I will shew it to him."<sup>5</sup>

The letter of Pausanias to the king of Persia is in the following strain:—"Pausanias, the general of Sparta, being minded to do thee a kindness, sends back to thee the men he has captured with the sword. And the thing I purpose, if it please thee, is to marry thy daughter, and to place Sparta, and all Greece, under thy government. I think I can do this, if we consult together upon it. If, therefore, such a plan as this is agreeable to you, send some one whom you can trust to the sea-side, through whom we may confer with each other."<sup>6</sup>

The letter of Pausanias has the Spartan flavour in it, and is expressed precisely in the terms we might have expected

<sup>4</sup> Herod. Thal. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 132

<sup>6</sup> Thucyd. i. i. s. 126.

from such a man. It is pregnant, short, and decisive. It seems written rather with the point of a sword than with the pen. The king's answer is equally characteristic: and if invented by Thucydides, is nevertheless in perfect character and keeping, as are all the strokes and touches which give effect to his living pictures.

"Thus saith Xerxes the king to Pausanias (Ὡδε λεγὼν Βασιλεὺς Ξέρξης Πανσανίᾳ): The benefit which thou hast done me respecting the men whom thou hast saved and sent to me beyond sea from Byzantium, is registered and engraven in our house for ever: and I receive with pleasure your proposals. Be not therefore remiss, night or day, in the performance of what you have promised: nor let the cost of gold and silver, or the number of soldiers which will be required, wheresoever they may be wanted, embarrass you; but at once enter upon a business, both for yourself and me, which will be promotive of the dignity and honour of us both, in concert with Artabazus, a worthy man, whom I have sent to you for that purpose."<sup>7</sup>

We have another letter in Thucydides of an interesting but very different character, written by Nicias, the worthy but unfortunate general of the Athenian forces, engaged in a war of unprovoked aggression against the people of Syracuse. Gylippus, the Lacedemonian commander, at the head of a powerful force at sea and on land, composed of Spartans, Corinthians, and Syracusans, with their Sicilian confederates, was pressing upon the army under Nicias, and hastening the catastrophe that proved so ruinous to Athens and its ill-fated general. The great contemporary historian of these events, so decisive of the affairs of Greece, thus introduces the letter of Nicias, of which one sees no reason to doubt the genuineness:—"Nicias, seeing the strength of the enemy and his own necessities to be daily increasing, dispatched messengers to Athens, as he was wont to do, respecting all the transactions of the war; but he felt it especially necessary now, thinking his danger to be imminent, to inform the state that unless they, with all

<sup>7</sup> Thucyd. i. i. s. 128.



speed, sent for those to come away that were there already, or sent them an effectual reinforcement, there was no hope of safety: and being afraid lest his messengers, from the want of adequate powers of expression, or clearness of judgment, or from a desire to please the citizens, might fail in describing the exact state of things, he wrote a letter, thinking that the proper way of making his mind fully known to his countrymen, (of which no part could now be kept back by the messenger,) and of furnishing them with a true ground for their deliberations. With these letters, and other instructions, the messengers repaired to Athens; and Nicias, in the mean time, having provided for the defence of his camp, took care to avoid hazarding an encounter with the enemy. The messengers arrived at Athens in the following winter, and having spoken what they were instructed to say, and answered such questions as were put to them, presented the letter of Nicias, which the city scribe, standing forth, read aloud to the people to the following effect:—

‘ You are made acquainted, Athenians, by many other letters from me with what has passed heretofore; and of our present condition it is no less necessary that you should be informed, that you may frame your resolutions upon it. Our situation then is this: after we had defeated the Syracusans in many engagements, and had built up walls, within which we had taken our station, Gylippus, a Lacedemonian, came against us, bringing with him an army from Peloponnesus, and also from some of the cities of Sicily. We overcame him in the first battle, but his superiority in cavalry and javelin men forced us, in a second engagement, to retreat, and secure ourselves within our fortifications. Nor, indeed, can we bring our whole force into the field, as part of our army is wanted for the defence of our walls. And they have also carried a wall straight up to us, so that we cannot make our own wall complete, unless some one should come with a large army to our aid, and gain for us this counter-wall. It has so fallen out, therefore, that we who considered ourselves

\* Thucyd. l. vii. s. 11.

as besieging others, have changed places, and become rather the besieged, in the occupation of our present position ; for we cannot move to any distance from the place in which we are stationed, on account of the enemy's horse. They have also sent to Peloponnesus for another army ; while Gylippus goes about the cities of Sicily to persuade such as have as yet made no movement, to take part with him in the war, and to obtain from others, if he can, an addition to his land force, as well as what is necessary for his navy. For it is their design, as I hear, to try what they can do against our walls with their army, and with their ships at sea. Nor let any of you persuade yourselves that it is an arduous undertaking for them to attack us at sea. For though our fleet, as was well known to the enemy, was at first composed of vessels perfectly sound and seaworthy, and our crews in good heart and health ; yet now, from being so long out at sea, our ships are become leaky, and our men worn out : for we have no opportunity for drawing the ships on shore to air and dry them, as those of the enemy, which are as good as ours, and more in number, keep us in constant expectation of an attack, which they seem on the point of hazarding. It rests with them to commence the enterprise when they think fit ; and in the mean time they have the means of drying and airing their vessels ; for they have not, as we, a station to defend against others. These objects we should find it difficult to effect, even had we ships enough and to spare, and were not compelled, as now, to employ them all to secure our position. For if we were in the smallest degree to reduce the amount of our protecting force, we should be in want of provisions, being now hardly able, on account of our proximity to the city, to convey the necessary supplies to our fleet. Thence it is that our mariners have perished, and are perishing, since they are cut off by the enemy's cavalry when they proceed to any distance to forage, or procure wood and water. Those who attend upon us, now that the two camps are opposite to each other, take the opportunity of going over to the enemy : and as to the strangers, some having come to us by constraint,

recently run off to the cities; and others, having been at first to join us by great wages, and thinking they came to enrich themselves rather than to fight, when, to their expectation, they see the enemy prepared to fight with us both by sea and land, but especially with us, partly go off from us upon some pretext into the arms of the enemy, and partly escape from us as they can, with room enough in Sicily. And there are some who have brought hither their Hyrcanian slaves, and persuaded the crews of galleies to receive them as their substitutes, to diminish our naval force of its strength and energy. I write to you to know well that a fleet remains in the height of its power but for a short period; and that the number is small of those who are skilled both in launching a galley and in rowing the oar.

The hardest of all is this, that it is not in my power as to order things otherwise, for you Athenians are of a nature so difficult to be governed. Nor have we any sources from which we can recruit our navy: for we must of necessity draw our supplies of men from the same place whence we drew them when we brought them with us, and who have been employed in the service: for our confederate cities, Naxos and Paros, are not able to supply us. If this one thing more be added to the present advantages of the enemy—that the cities of Italy from which we draw our subsistence, and our real condition, and the fact of our receiving no help from them, shall abandon us for them,—the war will be terminated without a battle, and nothing will remain for us but to surrender. I might send you communications more frequent, but surely less profitable, if it be important for you to take your measures upon a certain knowledge of the real things here. At the same time, well knowing the character of your minds to be this, that though you like to hear gratifying, yet that afterwards you are apt enough to repent, if any thing turns out otherwise than you expected, and that that state matters just as they were, was my safest and most prudent course.

‘And now the conclusion to which you ought to come is this—that the conduct neither of soldiers nor commanders deserves your censure respecting any of the objects of this expedition. But since all Sicily is hostile to us, and the enemy is expecting another army from Peloponnesus, it behoves you to consider and determine, as the force we now have is insufficient to contend with their present number, whether it will be proper to recall those who are here, or to send hither another army, not less than that which we have, both land and naval force, with money not a little; and likewise some one to take my place, as I am rendered unable to remain here by a disease in my reins. I think I merit your indulgence, for when I was in health I performed many good services for you in the conduct of your armies. Whatsoever you resolve to do, do it at the first coming in of the spring, avoiding procrastination. For the enemy will not be long in getting his reinforcements from Sicily, and though he will be somewhat longer in obtaining them from Peloponnesus, yet if you do not look well to it, he will elude your discovery, as he did before, or be beforehand with you in the quickness of his movements.’

The letter above produced, bears a very genuine impression of the simple, modest, and sedate character of the unfortunate commander; and insinuates pretty plainly the fickle and ungrateful treatment with which the Athenian state requited the services of their most devoted servants.

In introducing Alexander the Great to the notice of our readers, we will commence with the letter of his father, Philip of Macedon, to Aristotle, his learned preceptor, on the birth of his renowned son. Aulus Gellius has given us this letter from Philip. “*Φίλιππος Ἀριστοτελεῖ χαιρεῖν*: Know that a son is born to me, for which I am grateful to the gods; not so much for the birth of a son, as that he comes into the world in your time; for my hope is that, under your education and instruction, he will be worthy both of us, and of the succession to the government of this empire.”

Arrian relates, as a report generally received, and to which he gave credit, that soon after the battle of Issus, a confi-

dential eunuch, a principal attendant of the captive queen of Persia, Statira, found means, possibly with leave, to go to her unfortunate husband. On first sight of him, Darius hastily asked if his wife and children were living. The eunuch assuring him that not only all were well, but all treated with respect as royal personages, equally as before their captivity, the monarch's apprehension changed its object. The queen was generally said to be the most beautiful woman of the Persian empire. How, in the usual concealment of the persons of women of rank through the eastern nations, hardly less in ancient than in modern days, this could be known, unless from report of the eunuchs of the palace, Arrian has not said; but his account rather implies that her face had been seen by some of the Grecian officers. Darius's next question, however, was said to be, "Whether his queen's honour had been tarnished, either through her own weakness or by any violence?" The eunuch protesting, with solemn oaths, that she was as pure as when she parted from Darius, and adding that Alexander was the best and most honourable of men, Darius raised his hands towards heaven, and exclaimed, "O great God! who disposest of the affairs of kings amongst men, preserve to me the empire of the Persians and Medes, as thou gavest it: but if it be thy will that I am no longer to be king of Asia, let Alexander, in preference to all others, succeed to my power."

This account, which Arrian has judged not unworthy of a place in his military history of Alexander, is obviously not, like numberless stories of private conversations related by Diodorus, Plutarch, Quintus Curtius, and others, what none who were likely to know would be likely to tell; but, on the contrary, what, no way requiring concealment, the eunuch would rather be forward to relate; so that, not improbably, many Greeks, and among them some acquainted with his character, and able to estimate his veracity, might have had it from himself. It seems altogether not unlikely that the eunuch's report was the inducement of Darius to send the deputation to Alexander, which reached him at Marathus.



The persons deputed bore a letter from the Persian king, representing that, "between Artaxerxes Ochus and Philip there had been friendship and alliance: that after the accession of Arses, Philip, without provocation from Persia, had begun hostilities, which Alexander, passing into Asia, had prosecuted to the severe injury of the Persians; whence Darius was compelled to place himself at the head of his army, to protect his subjects and defend his own inherited rights: that God's displeasure had disposed of victory, and it now remained for him to solicit, as a king from a king, the release of his wife and family, and to offer to treat of peace and friendship; for which purpose he proposed that Alexander should send ministers to him with sufficient powers."

Communications of this kind appear to have been always, in regular course, laid by Alexander before his council. What provoked a reply differing in its character so widely from that of Alexander's conduct toward the Persian princesses, and even contradicting his reported assurance to them that he had no personal enmity toward Darius, ancient history has not said. Ground for conjecture seems only furnished by the fact of the capture of the Grecian deputies, from whom, or from whose writings, information of matters before unknown may have been gained. The answer to the Persian, in the form of a letter from the Macedonian monarch, is given by Arrian in the following terms:—

"Your predecessors, unprovoked, invaded Macedonia and the rest of Greece, to the great injury of the people. I, the elected general of the Greeks, have invaded Asia to revenge, not that ancient aggression only, but also recent wrongs. You supported the Perinthians, who had injured my father. Your predecessor, Ochus, sent forces into that part of Thrace which is within our dominion. In your own public letters you boasted to all the world of being a patron of the conspiracy which produced the assassination of my father. You yourself, with the eunuch Bagoas, assassinated Arses, and seized the empire, in violation of the law of Persia, and in wrong of the Persian people. Moreover, you sent your rescripts to the

aks, inciting them to war against me, and offering them  
 aidies to support it; which, the Lacedemonians alone  
 accepting, all others rejected. Nevertheless, your emissaries  
 did not desist from their intrigues for corrupting and alienat-  
 ing my friends and allies, and disturbing the peace of Greece,  
 which through my endeavours had been established. On  
 these accounts I have made war against you, who have been  
 the aggressor. Having overcome in battle, first your  
 generals and satraps, and then yourself, and having thus,  
 with the favour of the gods, possessed myself of the coun-  
 try, all your former subjects and adherents, even those who had  
 taken arms against me, coming to me for protection, have been  
 treated kindly; and they have served me in arms, not by com-  
 pulsion but by good will. I, therefore, as now lord of all Asia,  
 bid you to come to me. If you have any apprehension for  
 your safety, send a confidential person to receive my pledged  
 word. When with me, ask for your wife and family, and  
 whatever else you may desire, and you shall have all: ask  
 freely; nothing shall be refused. But whenever hereafter you  
 shall communicate with me, I must be addressed as king of  
 Asia, lord of all you possess, and of all you can desire; other-  
 wise I shall reckon myself affrontingly treated. If you pro-  
 pose yet to dispute the sovereignty with me, be it so, and expect  
 that I shall seek you wherever you may be to be found."

In this letter Mitford makes the following comment:—"It  
 is here deserve consideration that we want the reply of  
 the Persian court to the charge of its having been implicated  
 in the assassination of Philip."

\* Mitford's History of Greece, vol. ix. chap. 48.

## CHAPTER X.

## EARLY LETTER-WRITING AMONG THE ROMANS.

THOSE miscellaneous productions assuming to be the letters of eminent men of ancient times, exhibited in the collection of Leo Allatius, Aldus, Cujacius, and others who have dealt in these spurious wares, are, as before observed, deserving of little credit. They are usually written in indifferent Greek, and contain a very rare sprinkling of sound knowledge of instructive communication. The misfortune is, that these epistles have been heaped together without discrimination, and if there are some among them which might have a better title than others to be attended to, the circumstances distinguishing them have been disregarded by those collectors. The precepts intended to guide us in the art of letter-writing, which are found among those collections, are in general very insipid and useless.

Little or nothing in the shape of letter-writing as existing among the Romans in the days of the commonwealth, before the age of Cicero, has come down to us. The military habits of that people, their absorbing ambition, their restless political agitations, and their addiction to brutal entertainments, left them little leisure or taste for the cultivation and improvement of epistolary intercourse. Those republicans were characterised by a dryness of genius, and certain coarse and homespun habits of thinking, which ill qualified them for the graceful play of thought and expression which properly belongs to good letter-writing. Nor do letters of business and grave affairs appear but very rarely among the transactions recorded by the historians of the Roman republic. The mind of the nation took a sudden spring under the influence of Cicero's genius, who at once gave and completed the pattern.

In the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, and other Greek historians, letters of statesmen, sages, princes, governors, and military commanders, are frequent; but such histories as remain to us of the affairs of Rome in its republican form exhibit few examples of intercourse by letters. Plutarch, in his *Life of Pyrrhus*, gives us the letter of Fabricius to the king, communicating to him the treacherous proposal of his physician, Nicias, to take off his master by poison; but Livy contents himself with setting forth the particulars. The letter runs thus:—

“Fabricius and Q. Æmilius to King Pyrrhus, health.

“You seem to be unhappy in your choice both of your friends and your enemies. When you have read the letter sent us by one of your own people, you will perceive that you are making war with good and honest men, while you are trusting to the dishonest and wicked. We make you acquainted with these things, not out of regard to you, but lest your destruction should bring a slander upon us, and we should appear to have accomplished this war by treachery, for want of ability to conclude it by valour.”

Upon the receipt of this letter, Pyrrhus is said to have exclaimed, “This is a man whom it is harder to turn aside from the ways of justice and honour than to divert the sun from its course.”

Among the fragments of *Nepos* there is one the genuineness of which may be and has been doubted, and yet it is not unaccredited, and possesses such internal marks as will not show it to be hastily rejected. It is a letter of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, to Caius her son. In a note subjoined by Andreas Schottus he writes thus:—“Now I will add a fragment of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, (to whom, according to Cicero and Fabius, they attributed the eloquence for which they were celebrated) which, whether it be genuine or the fabrication of some declaimer, is a point which I do not now enter upon. Suffice it to say, it was found in an old book of the Abbey of Fesulæ, and being politely offered to me by Antonius Augustinus, archbishop of Tarragona, after

the same had been copied by James Bengarsius from a British MS. I thought it should be added to the Cornelian papers."

But though Schottus appears to have doubted concerning the genuineness of this fragment, other learned persons have thought that the letter possesses a character of genuineness and that it has the flavour of antiquity (*αρχαϊκόν*).

"I can upon my oath say that, except the men who killed Tiberius Gracchus, no enemy of mine has occasioned me so much trouble and so much sorrow as you, by the conduct you have been pursuing. You ought to have supplied the place of the children I have lost; and to have made it your concern that I should have as little anxiety as possible in the time of my old age. Your desire should have been that what you took in hand should be such as was calculated to give me pleasure; and you should have considered it a crime to do any thing of moment which was opposed to my opinion, when the short remnant of my life is properly regarded. But the fewness of my days has been of no avail for me, nor has deterred you from opposing me, and bringing ruin upon the state. What rest are we to look for? When will bounds be set to these proceedings? When shall we cease to be in troubles, whether present or absent? And when will it be disgraceful to throw the republic into confusion and disturbance? But if these things must be, at least seek not to be tribune till I am no more. When I am gone do what you please; when I shall know it not. When I am dead you will perform my funeral rites with the customary honours; you will invoke your parent as a deity. Then you will not be ashamed to worship the manes of those whom, when alive, you neither respected nor heeded. O may you be stopped in your mad career! if not, such sorrow will be the result of your criminal folly, that throughout your days you will never know peace."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The letter imports to have been written after the violent death of Tiberius Gracchus: "A man," says Patereulus, "of the finest parts, the greatest innocence of life, and the purest intentions;" and of whom Cicero confesses that "he came nothing short of the virtue of his grandfather, Africanus,



The following letter, said to have been addressed to Mithridates from Sylla, while dictator, and written from the camp, breathes the true spirit of republican haughtiness:—

"I mind not, Mithridates, that the war is at a great distance from Rome, fortune having always waited upon her at whatever distance she may be. But since you say she has never failed you, but has never concerned herself with me, you may soon find that, according to her customary fickleness, she will leave you for me. Yet, if she should not, I care not for her or you, always hoping that the gods will be more favourable to my justice than fortune to your arrogance."

The letter of Catiline to Catulus, as given us by Sallust, was well suited to the character of that violent man, covering his desperate designs with the pretext of justifiable resistance and self-defence:—

"L. Catilina to Q. Catulo, S. Your remarkable fidelity, approved by acts, has given me boldness in these great perils to commend myself to you; wherefore I have determined not to resort to any other counsel for my defence. I resolved, but not from a consciousness of any criminality in my conduct, to propose a satisfaction, the sincerity of which I swear by Hercules you may ascertain if you will. Goaded by injuries and contumelies, being deprived of the fruits of my labour and industry, and not obtaining my proper station in

except that he forsook the party of the senate." Cornelia, the wife of Sempronius Gracchus, was left a widow with twelve children, all of whom, except one daughter, Sempronia, married to Scipio Africanus, and two sons, Tiberius and Caius, she lost at an early season. Tiberius and Caius were educated by her with the greatest care; and to the advantages of their maternal education, though their natural parts were doubtless very good, were chiefly owing the eminence to which they attained. She had retired to Misenum after the death of Tiberius; and thither, it is said, the body of Caius, after his tragical death, was brought to her. She is said to have passed the remainder of her days in a country-house at this place.

That Cornelia was a writer of letters we know from Cicero, who, in his dialogue *De Claris Oratoribus*, entitled Brutus, thus mentions the fact:—

"Legimus epistolas Corneliae matris Gracchorum. Apparet filios non tam in optimo educatos, quam in Sermone matris." Brut. lvi.

the commonwealth, I undertook the cause of the miserable, as has been ever my practice. I was able to pay my debts, contracted on my own account, from my own property; while those contracted on the account of others the liberality of Orestilla could pay out of her own means and those of her daughters: it was not, therefore, the desperation of my circumstances that has forced me to act as I do, but because I saw that unworthy men were preferred to posts of honour, and that I was excluded under a false charge. On this account I betook myself to ways sufficiently honourable in my circumstances for preserving the remains of my dignity.

"I was about to write more at large, but that I was informed that violence was to be used against me.

"I now commend Orestilla, and deliver her to your faithful care; entreating you, by the love you bear to your own children, to defend her from all injurious treatment."

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With the pen of Cicero letter-writing began to take its rank in polite literature as a specific head or department of composition.

As the illustrations and rules of poetic composition were borrowed by Aristotle from the example of Homer, who has left to the world the earliest and best specimen of the epic model; so the practice and authority of Cicero appear to have furnished rules best entitled to determine the character and merits of the epistolary style. According to that high authority in every department of literature, it was a species of writing enjoying the privilege of great ease and familiarity, as well in its diction as in its treatment of its subject, and to considerable liberty in the employment of wit and humour. He admits that the composition of a letter may be allowed to vary with the subject matter, yet the general style most suitable to its character and spirit he considers to be that which is most in use in the ordinary and daily intercourse of society. Thus, in one of his letters to Pœtus, he expresses his admiration of his simple and playful use of words, and

especially his indigenous humour, such as characterised the old Romans,—preferable in his esteem to that which had the title of *Attic*. He even asks his friend whether he himself does not seem, in the letters he writes to him, to adopt a common and almost plebeian manner of writing, which he confesses to be rather his aim, being accustomed to affect only words of every-day stamp in his correspondence. There is reason to think, however, that Cicero usually took pains with the style of his letters, and that it was not his frequent practice to write in haste, though on some occasions he must have done so; as where he wrote reclining at an entertainment, which was the case when he dispatched a letter to the same Poetus, describing on his tablet the persons present, and the topics of their conversation. It cannot be doubted, however, that he wrote some with a view to their publication. In a letter to Atticus he says, “There is no collection (*συναγωγή*) of my letters, but Tiro has about seventy, and some you can furnish. These I must look over and correct, and they may finally be given to the public.”<sup>2</sup>

In Cicero's view of letter-writing, its style and manner ought to vary with the complexion of its subject matter, and can be subjected to no abstract system of rules. In a letter to Curo he propounds three principal kinds, or genera, of epistles, giving the first place to that which simply conveys interesting intelligence; being, as he says, the very object for which the thing itself came into existence; the second place to the jocose; and the third to the serious and solemn. But, whether used as the vehicle of playful thoughts or of matters of serious import, it was the opinion of Cicero that there was something sacred in its contents, which gave it the strongest claim to be withheld from third persons where it was of a private nature, and chiefly because in such communications we give the freest scope to our feelings and fancies; for “who,” says this great man in his second philippic, “that is at all influenced by good habits and feelings, has ever allowed

<sup>2</sup> And see Ep. to Tiro, l. xvi. ep. 17.

himself to resent an affront or injury by exposing to others any letters received from the offending person during their intercourse of friendship? What else," continued the orator, with the same warmth of expression, "would be the tendency of such a conduct but to rob the very life of life of its social charms? How many pleasantries find their way into letters, as amusing to the correspondents as they are insipid to others; and how many subjects of serious interest which are entirely unfit to be brought before the public."

The letters of his son are the theme of his high commendation, as being *φιλοσοφῶς et εὐπινῶς scriptæ*, that is, that they spoke the language of affection with a severe simplicity, after the ancient manner, and on that very account were well worthy of being read aloud before a company of friends.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes he approves of a letter as being written *πραγματικῶς*, in a business-like style; and again, he represents himself as writing during his meals, using the first pen that came to hand.

Sometimes the sort of letter he desires to receive from his friend is *epistola ponderosa*, charged with all his matters, opinions, and doings, as being the *colloquies amicorum absentium*: and once or twice he founds an inference of his son's progress in learning upon the more accurate composition of his letters. Upon the whole, he seems to have thought that, whether the subject be solemn or familiar, learned or colloquial, general or particular, political or domestic, an easy, vivacious, unaffected diction gives to epistolary writing its proper grace and perfection: and, according to him and others who have bequeathed to us the best patterns, good letter-writing is little else than conversation on paper, carried on between parties personally separated; with this advantage, that it brings the minds of the conversers into reciprocal action with more room for reflection, and with fewer disturbances than can usually consist with personal conversation.

About the time of Cicero it was much the fashion among

<sup>3</sup> Ep. to Att. lxx. ep. 17.

men of accomplishment to correspond in Greek. Cicero both spoke and wrote in Greek, and was reprimanded for addressing the council of Syracuse in a Greek oration; and Lucullus wrote much in this favourite language. In Rome, indeed, it became at last so to prevail, that it grew to be the principal language of polite literature.<sup>4</sup> Thus Cicero pro Archia, "*Græca leguntur in omnibus fere gentibus; latina suis finibus, exiguis sane, continentur.*" Cicero wrote a Greek letter to Cæsar. Marcus Brutus is said to have corresponded much in the Greek language, and to have affected in his Greek letters a very laconic style. There are some instances given of this character of his compositions in Plutarch's life of him. In the beginning of the war conducted by him after Julius Cæsar's death, he writes thus to the Pergamenians:—"I hear you have given money to Dolabella. If you give it willingly, you must own you have injured me; if unwillingly, shew it by giving willingly to me." On another occasion he writes to the Samnians in the following terms:—"Your deliberations are tedious, your actions slow; what think you will be the result?" Of the Patereans and Xantheans he thus expresses himself:—"The Xantheans rejected my kindness, and desperately made their country their grave. The Patereans confided in me, and retained their liberty. It is in your own choice to imitate the prudence of the Patereans, or to suffer the fate of the Xantheans."

The collection of Greek epistles which pass under his name are probably none of them genuine, but fabricated upon the hint given by Plutarch. They are introduced in the publication of Cujacius as having been collected by Mithridates, a cousin of the great monarch of that name, who pre-

<sup>4</sup> Q. Fabius and L. Cincius, early Roman historians, often cited by Dionysius, wrote in Greek (Dionys. Hal. Antiq. Rom. l. i. p. 5); and Hannibal himself is said to have written in that language (Corn. Nep. in Vit. c. 13). Lucian has, therefore, been properly censured for representing Hannibal as learning Greek for the first time, in the shades below. Josephus and Philo preferred Greek to their own language; and this preference of the Greek language prevailed while the Romans were in the height of their power. See Docton de illust. Gramm.



sents them to his royal relative as specimens of the terse and elegant style of the Roman commander, and to which he framed such answers as might be supposed to have been made to them in the same brief and sententious form. If the Greek epistles ascribed to Brutus himself are given as genuine, and probably were by many so accounted, for we find Philostratus considering Brutus as the best letter-writer among military commanders, though it is to be remembered that Philostratus was himself a dealer in these spurious articles.

## CHAPTER XI.

## LETTERS TO CICERO FROM HIS FRIENDS.

MANY of the letters to Cicero from his correspondents are very lively specimens of talent in this branch of composition. They seem to have been reflections of that radiance which his own peculiar genius threw around him. He flourished in the most remarkable era in the civil history of man. The Roman name and power had filled the world. Whatever in human affairs has the strongest tendency to exalt the imagination and the passions, and to give the fullest exercise to the mental faculties, was then in operation on the largest scale. All that philosophy, or war, or ambition, could do in moulding and diversifying character was in full activity. In the absence of balanced, defined, and legitimate authority over the vast expanse of territory conquered by infuriate force, and kept in awe by a tumultuous dominion, terrific room was given for the development of individual energy, and the aims of personal aggrandizement.

There never was a period in which so many great actors were upon the stage at once, performing their independent parts in the struggle for power, and the work of general disturbance. The precepts and dogmas of heathen ethics, bred and fostered in the nurseries and schools of fable and philosophy, had reached their maturity and natural consummation: but the proper idea of civil society was never realized under any circumstances of human condition, before the revelation of the Gospel of God laid the solid foundation of reciprocal duty and commutative justice.

The familiar intercourse of letters among the most distinguished men of a period such as is here alluded to, must

needs be in the highest degree interesting and instructive; and it is on this ground, that the letters of Cicero and his correspondents compose a document the most important perhaps of any which has been saved to us among the remains of heathen antiquity. There is not, indeed, any collection of the familiar correspondence of modern times in which so numerous a train of great and leading characters engaged in transactions affecting the whole moral world in its consequences pass in review before us.

The age of Cicero was in many respects peculiarly interesting. It was a great preparatory epoch, in which the Roman world in its vast imperial compass lay stretched out to receive and diffuse the message of grace and peace that was coming in the fulness of time. It is not a little interesting to mix, as it were, familiarly in sentiment and mental intercourse with the most celebrated men of an age in which all that could have been done was done, without Divine illumination, to unfold the properties and mature the efforts of the human understanding;—when the wisdom of this world, with all the gifts and endowments which the schools of man's teaching could confer, stood on the verge of that new and glorious system with which it was soon to be brought into comparison.

Interesting, however, as was the aggregate of the correspondence which was formed about Cicero as a centre, it may be generally remarked that, with some exceptions, the letters of the contemporaries of Cicero are inferior to Cicero's own. The times were tempestuous, and Rome was hastening to its catastrophe. All was stir and business, and factious intriguing. It was in the power only of such a man as Cicero to retreat from the external tumult within his own intellectual world, and to comment at large on the scenes and transactions in which his own destiny was so immediately involved; and without the frequent interspersions of such matters as engage our common sympathies, and touch the springs of our common feeling, no letters, however important as illustrative of history or character, can be generally pleasing or attractive. It is only a large way of dealing with a present subject that

makes those who come after parties to the correspondence, however remote in time or place.

Some of the letters of Cicero's friends deserve a particular notice. That of Cato especially is a valuable relic, as it is the only piece of writing which has come down to us from the pen of that remarkable Roman. The occasion of it was as follows:—Cicero, during his government of the province of Cilicia, having learned that C. Cassius was blocked up by the Parthians at Antioch, who had even advanced into Cilicia, proceeded with his army to the passes of Amanus, by a rapid march from Cappadocia over the mountains of Taurus, and by this decisive movement induced the enemy to retire from Antioch; thereby giving to Cassius the opportunity of harassing them greatly on their retreat. At Amanus, Cicero succeeded in defeating and dispersing a race of freebooters inhabiting those mountains, who, confiding in the strength of their position, had long bid defiance to the Roman arms. After which success, his troops were lodged in the same station which Alexander had used after his great victory over Darius at the battle of Issus; a circumstance regarded with no little complacency by Cicero. From Amanus he led his army against a people maintaining their independence in the fastnesses of another part of the same high lands, whose chief town was called Pindenissum, which place, after a six weeks' investment, he compelled to surrender to the Roman arms. For these successes Cicero had been saluted emperor, as was usual on such occasions, and only wanted the ceremony of a public thanksgiving to satisfy his vanity, which is said to have inflated him with the hopes of a triumph. The personal weight and authority of Cato was then very high, and it was the earnest desire of Cicero to engage his vote in support at least of a decree of the senate for a supplication as it was called. Cato nevertheless voted against it, being of opinion, that the honour of a supplication had been too cheaply bestowed; but he spoke on this occasion in high commendation of Cicero's conduct, both civil and military, and when the senate had decided agreeably to Cicero's wishes, assisted

in drawing up the decree, and had his own name inserted in it, as was usually done, when a particular expression of personal respect and friendship was intended.<sup>1</sup> When the business in the senate was concluded, Cato wrote the following letter:

M. CATO TO M. J. CICERO EMP.

THAT which both the republic and our friendship require of me, I rejoice to comply with, in bearing testimony to your virtue, integrity, and diligence, approved in the greatest affairs, and exerted every where with equal perseverance as a senator at home and as a commander abroad. I did all, therefore, that I could, with the consent of my judgment and conviction, both in giving my vote and in the wording of the decree, by ascribing to your fidelity and good conduct the defence of your province, the safety of the kingdom and person of Ariobarzanes, and the bringing back the allies to their duty and attachment to the Roman state. If it is your wish that where chance has had no part, but all has been owing to your very great prudence and moderation, we should hold ourselves rather indebted to the gods than to yourself, I am glad that a supplication has been decreed. But if you think that a supplication is a preparation for a triumph, and for that reason choose that fortune should have the credit of what has been done by you, I must observe, that a triumph does not always follow a supplication; and that it is much more for the honour of a general that the senate should decree that a province has been preserved to the empire by the mildness and equity of his administration, than by the force of arms and the favour of the gods. This was my object in voting as I did; and I have now used more words than I am accustomed to do, that you may be persuaded of what it is my earnest wish to prove to you, that though I had a desire to do what I took to be most for your dignity and honour, yet I am glad to see *that* done which is most agreeable to

<sup>1</sup> Ep. Fam. xv. 6.



your wishes. Farewell, and continue your affection to me. Persevere in the course which you have hitherto pursued, with respect both to the allies and to the republic.

The above letter is by no means a specimen of Cato's imputed roughness and rusticity, nor does it seem to merit the degree of displeasure which it evidently caused in the mind of Cicero.\*

It was in the 704th year from the building of Rome, and 49th *n. c.* in the consulship of C. Claudius Marcellus, and L. Corn. Lentulus Crassus, that the senate, on the motion of Scipio, voted a decree that Cæsar should dismiss his army by a certain day, or be declared an enemy. The decree was ineffectual. Cæsar passed the Rubicon, the boundary of his province, and, marching into Italy, made an immediate conquest of all the considerable towns which came first in his way. Rome was panic-struck. Its defenders fled, and Pompey retreated at the approach of Cæsar, leaving his party in the greatest consternation. Cæsar proposed terms, part of the conditions of which was that Pompey should go to his government of Spain, and dismiss his new levies. These proposals were discussed in a council at Capua, at which Cicero was present: but pending the treaty the conqueror pressed on with vigour, and shewed plainly that he had no real thoughts of peace. All the towns of the empire were armed against him, and though he had the most powerful single army in the world, yet Pompey was master of the sea, with other great advantages. Domitius, with a considerable force, accompanied by some of the principal senators, made a stand at Corfinium, where they were besieged by Cæsar, and being compelled to surrender, became the first subjects of his clemency and moderation after his hostile entrance into Italy; while Pompey was acknowledging by his flight his superiority in the field. Among the consular Romans whom

\* "Areo scire, Cato quid agat: qui quidem in me turpiter fuit malevolus," &c. *Ad. Att. vii. 2.*

Cæsar had dismissed at Corfinium was Lentulus Spinther, a particular friend of Cicero, and a principal promoter, when consul, of his restoration from banishment; and for this generous treatment of his friend, Cicero had written a letter of thanks to Cæsar, to which Cæsar returned the following answer:

CÆSAR IMP. TO CICERO IMP.

Y<sup>ou</sup> judge rightly of me (for you know me well), that nothing is further from me than cruelty: and as the thing itself which I have done gives me pleasure in the reflection upon it, so is it to me matter of triumph and joy that it is approved of by you. Nor does it at all move me, that those who were dismissed by me, are said to have departed to renew the war against me: for I desire nothing more than that I may always be like *myself*, and they like *themselves*. My wish is that you may give me your presence in the city, that I may use your counsel and assistance in all things, as heretofore I have been used to do. I assure you nothing is dearer to me than Dolabella; I will therefore owe this favour to him. He could not, indeed, have acted otherwise than he has done; such is his humanity, his intelligence, and his benevolence towards me.

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Pompey, after the defeat at Corfinium, retired to Brundisium, and declared his design of quitting Italy, and carrying the war abroad. Here he wrote letters to Cicero at Formiæ, pressing him to join him immediately. But Cicero was by no means satisfied with his conduct, and was moreover much displeased with his short and careless manner of writing on a matter so important. Pompey's letter was in the terms following:—

N. POMPEIUS MAGNUS, PROCONSUL, TO M. CICERO IMP.

If you are in health, it is well. I read your letter with pleasure: for I recognised in it your wonted virtue in your regard to the public safety. The consuls are come to the army which

I had in Apulia. I earnestly exhort you, by your singular and constant zeal for the republic, also to come to us, that by our united counsel we may bring help and relief to the afflicted commonwealth. I think you had best come by the Appian road, and make for Brundisium.

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Cicero did not approve of the conduct and measures of Pompey in this trying state of public affairs; and in his answer to Pompey's letters, he intimates pretty plainly his opinion, that he had done wrongly in betaking himself to Brundisium, instead of hastening to the relief of Corfinium. His disgust at the desertion of Italy by the general on whom Rome had placed its ultimate confidence, was perhaps one of his reasons for his not proceeding immediately to join Pompey at Brundisium; but it was evident that he looked to the possibility of a temporary adjustment, at least, between the hostile parties, and was unwilling, with such a possibility before him, to make Cæsar his decided enemy. While things were in this attitude with respect to Cicero, Cæsar appeared to be making efforts, with the intervention of common friends, to conciliate him, or at least to induce him to stand neuter; and seeing him remaining still apart from Pompey, he appears to have entertained the hope of persuading him to return to Rome, and assist in the councils of the senate. With this view, Cæsar, while following Pompey to Brundisium, sent the following letter to Cicero, then at one of his villas near the sea:

CÆSAR IMP. TO CICERO IMP.

THOUGH I could but just see our friend Furnius; and could neither speak, nor listen, with convenience; but was hastening on my march, having sent my legions before me; I could not but write to you, and send him with my thanks. Notwithstanding I have done this often before, and am likely oftener still to do the same again, (so well do you deserve of me,) yet

I make it my special request, as I trust speedily to return the city, that I may see you there; and that by your countenance and kindness, and the weight of your character, I may be assisted in all my affairs. I will write again on this point. You pardon the haste and brevity of my letter. You will be the rest from Furnius.

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The letter of Cæsar, above produced, was agreeable to the tone and character of all his communications; short, rapid and decisive; but full to the purpose. It was the letter of one bent on the accomplishment of a single project, on which the fate of an empire was suspended; of one hastening to his purpose, to which whatever interposed itself was to be made subordinate, or was to be pushed aside. The world itself was the prize before him, and nothing in the world could stop his way. He had neither eyes nor ears for anything that did not make for his object. He wanted no counsel but his own; when Cicero was asked for *his*, nothing was intended but co-operation or his neutrality. Like a vessel ploughing the ocean with all its canvass set, he took the wind and at once into his service, and looked at difficulty and danger as mattering to his fortune; while Cicero, shaken by doubt and distrust, amidst shifting winds and opposing currents, was waiting to be decided by the issue of events beyond his calculation, and above his control. All the ulterior purposes of Cæsar were comprehended in the resolution which dictated the passage of the fatal boundary. Cicero was, indeed, perspicacious not to see that Cæsar's courtesy towards him was only one among the means of carrying forward his gigantic aims. This appears from one of his letters to Atticus, wherein, speaking of a visit made to him by the younger Balbus, in his way with a message from Cæsar, he says: "He (Balbus) told me, Cæsar desired nothing so much as to overtake Pompey, which I believe; and to be friends with him again, which I do not believe. I begin to fear that all this clemency means not

than at last to give the one cruel blow. The elder Cato writes me word that Cæsar wishes nothing more than to live in safety, and yield the first rank to Pompey. You tell him, I suppose, to be in earnest?"

The answer of Cicero to the letter of Cæsar above produced, is such as might be expected from the state of mind above ascribed to him. In his anxiety to stand well both with Cæsar and Pompey, he talks in the following memorable offer of a reconciliation between them, which he must have known to be impossible. He thus writes:

CICERO IMP. TO CÆSAR IMP.\*

After reading your letter delivered to me by Furnius, in which you pressed me to go to the city, I did not so much wonder at what you there intimated of your desire to use my advice and authority, but was at a loss to find out what you meant by my interest and assistance; yet I flattered myself with a persuasion that your great sagacity and prudence had made you desirous of entering into some measures for establishing the peace and concord of the city. And in that case I considered that my temper and character did really qualify me to be employed in such a mediation. If this be so, and you have any concern for the safety of our friend Pompey, my care to reconcile him to yourself and to the republic, you will assuredly find no man more proper for such a work than I am, who from the very first have always been the promoter of peace both to him and to the senate, and since course has been had to arms have not interfered in the war; which I have always thought to be injurious to your best interests, while your enemies and enviers were attempting to deprive you of those honours which the Roman people had granted you. But as at that time I not only myself pro-

\* The letter properly belongs to the ensuing chapter, but for the sake of mediation is inserted in this place.



moted your dignity, but encouraged others to do the same. So now the honour of Pompey greatly interests me. In many years ago, I made choice of you two as persons with whom it was desirable to cultivate a particular friendship. I then, I desire of you, or rather I beg and beseech you, with all entreaties, that in the midst of your hurry and anxiety you will consider for a moment in what manner I may be permitted to prove myself an upright, grateful, and devoted man, in remembering a benefit of the highest kind conferred on me. If this request had reference only to myself, I should hope, nevertheless, to obtain it from you; but it concerns, I think, both your honour and the republic, that by your means I should be allowed to continue where I may best promote harmony between yourself and Pompey, as well as the general concord of all the citizens.

After I had sent my thanks to you before, on the account of Lentulus (Lentulus Spinther) for giving safety to him who had given it to me, yet upon reading his letter, in which he expresses the most grateful sense of your liberality, I considered myself as much indebted to your bounty as Lentulus himself. And if you perceive me to be thus grateful, I entreat you to put it in my power to be grateful also to Pompey.

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For this letter Cicero has been much blamed, and it cannot be denied that there is not much in it of the sternness of Roman virtue. Inferior as was the cause of Cæsar in motive and principle, it placed his character at an elevation great above that of Cicero, in the qualities which satisfy the world's conception of greatness.

While Cicero, at one of his marine villas, seemed to be waiting only for a wind to carry him over to Pompey, Cæsar sent him a kind letter or two from Rome, to compose his apprehensions, and induce him, if possible, to remain quiet. The following letter makes an insidious attempt to draw him off from the party of Pompey, by his regard to his own ease and personal safety:

## CÆSAR IMP. TO CICERO IMP.

ALTHOUGH I was sure you would do nothing rashly or imprudently, yet, moved by common report, I judged it proper to write to you, and to beg of you, by our mutual affection, that you would not betake yourself now to a declining cause, which you did not think fit to adopt while it stood unimpaired. But you will do the greatest injury to our friendship, and consult but ill for yourself, if you do not follow where fortune leads (for all things have turned out most prosperously for us and most adversely for them), nor will your view of the cause itself appear to have been consistently followed, since that remains as it was when you judged it right to withdraw yourself from their counsels; but it will seem that you have fallen out with something which I have done, than which nothing done on your part towards myself could affect me more seriously, and which, by the rights of our friendship, I beg I may not experience at your hands. In fine, let me ask you what is more suitable to the character of a virtuous and quiet man, and a good citizen, than to live apart from civil broils? which are avoided by some more from the mere apprehension of danger than from any dislike of contention; but you, having such full opportunity of understanding my intentions from the testimony of my whole life, and having made such trial of my friendship, will be satisfied upon these assurances that nothing can be more safe and honourable for you than to stand aloof from all contention. The 16th April, on the road.

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Cæsar's friends made many similar efforts to deter Cicero from leaving Italy, and actively joining the party of Pompey, by placing before him the comfort and enjoyment attendant upon a seclusion from all intermixture with the troubles of the state, in which he might quietly pursue his refined and intellectual occupations. But to the credit of Cicero, it must

be admitted that his sense of duty to his country would not allow him to adopt such a selfish line of conduct. Cælius' letter to him is distinguished among the many sent to him with the same object for its address and importunity.

## CÆLIUS TO CICERO.

THROWN into the greatest consternation by your letter, in which you shew that you are meditating nothing but what is dismal, while you neither clearly state to me what the thing is, nor the nature of it, I have forthwith written this letter to you. By all your fortunes, Cicero, by your children, I pray and beseech you not to take any step injurious to your safety; for I call the gods, and men, and our friendship to witness, that what I have predicted and forewarned you of was not a hasty and rash suggestion of my fears, but the effect of information derived from an interview with Cæsar in which I learned fully from him what he had determined to do after his victory. If you think that Cæsar will always adopt the same method of dealing with his enemies (as at Confinium), upon conditions, you are in a mistake. He meditates nothing but what is fierce and severe, and is gone away much out of humour with the senate; evidently provoked by the opposition he has met with: and, depend upon it, his anger will be unappeasable. Wherefore if your own person, your only son, your house, your remaining hopes, be dear to you; if I, and that excellent man your son-in-law, have any weight with you, you cannot persuade yourself to ruin the fortune of these persons by compelling them either to act as enemies towards a cause in which their own safety is involved, or to entertain any impious wishes in opposition to yours.

Lastly, reflect on this—that by your delay you have given great offence, and now to declare against a conqueror whom you were unwilling to offend while his success was doubtful, and to go over to those who have been forced to run away and whom you would not join when in an attitude of resist-

ance, would be the greatest folly. Take care that if you are mistaken not to be one of the best citizens, you are not hasty in determining what is the best. But if at present I am unable to persuade you, at least wait till it is known what we mean in Spain; which, take my word for it, will be ours as soon as Cæsar comes thither. What hopes they can have when Spain is lost I know not; and what your purpose is in proceeding to a cause so desperate is truly past my finding out. As to that which I discover from your very silence about it, Cæsar has heard of it, and hardly had he got out the usual words of salutation on our meeting, when he told me what he had heard of you. I denied all knowledge of the matter; but at the same time begged him to write to you such a letter as might be best calculated to induce you to remain in Italy. He takes me with him into Spain. If he did not, I would run away to you wherever you might be, before I came to Rome, to attend this point with you in person, and retain you by main force. Again and again, I say, Cicero, consider this well; that you may not utterly ruin yourself and all that belongs to you; that you may not knowingly and advisedly bring yourself into a strait from which you will be unable to deliver yourself. But if either the opinions of certain men of note keep you in awe, or you are unable to bear the insolence and saughtiness of some others, I would recommend you to select some place remote from the war till the present struggles are decided. If you do this, I shall think you have acted wisely, and in so doing you will give no offence to Cæsar.

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It has been often remarked as a circumstance that reflected great honour upon Cicero, that when the empire of the world depended upon a question which was to be decided by the sword alone, the leaders on both sides should deem it a matter of so much importance to obtain his friendship for the sake only of the credit and weight of his judgment and character. His delay in repairing to the camp of Pompey, was imputed by his enemies to the mean policy of waiting to see which

party proved the stronger, that his adherence might be decided by the event; yet the far more probable explanation is found in the fact that he laboured with great consistency of effort, though, as it would seem, in this instance, with a short view of the current of events, and a defective insight into character, to reconcile the quarrels of men for whose ambition the world was not wide enough. Cæsar and his friends insisted only on Cicero's remaining neutral, and retiring to a distance from the contention; but Pompey and the better cause required his active and decided adherence; and however inconvenient for Cicero, and repugnant to his habits and addictions, he determined to share the destinies of Rome, and to commit himself to an element of storm and danger in the vessel of the state.

The entreaties of his family, and especially of his daughter, Tullia, who besought him to wait only for the issue of the war which Cæsar was just engaging in with the best troops of Pompey, could prevail only to detain him a short time at his Formian villa. He left Italy, and, sailing for Dyrrachium, arrived at the camp of Pompey, to whom, out of his private purse, he furnished so large a sum of money as greatly to injure his own fortune. Pompey, in the opinion of Cicero, committed many blunders in the conduct of that disastrous campaign. After the battle of Pharsalia, which took place while Cicero was in the camp at Dyrrachium, he returned to Italy, about the end of October in the year of the city 706, to depend upon the mercy of Cæsar while Cæsar lived; and it must be owned he had never any reason to complain of the treatment he received at the hands of that generous conqueror. He was at Brundisium when he heard of the death of Pompey; an event which appeared to have been fully expected by him, and on which he thus expressed himself in a letter to Atticus:—"Non possum ejus casum non dolere: hominem enim integrum, et castum, et gravem cognovi."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> His body was burned by one of his freedmen, and his ashes, being conveyed to Rome, were deposited by his wife, Cornelia, in a vault of his Alban villa. The Egyptians raised a monument to him on the place where he was



The first interview between Cicero and Cæsar, after the return of the latter from the victory at Pharsalia, is described by Plutarch in terms greatly to the credit of Cæsar's urbanity and clemency. On the first notice of Cæsar's coming forward to Rome, Cicero set out on foot to meet him; but Cæsar no sooner saw him than he alighted, ran to embrace him, and walked with him alone, conversing very familiarly with him for several furlongs.

Cæsar embarked for Africa about the end of the year of the city 707; and while the fate of the war in that quarter between him and the Pompeian generals, assisted by King Juba, held the Roman empire in suspense, Cicero, in learned seclusion, was extending his studies and enquiries over various provinces of literature and philosophy. In this interim he parted with his wife Terentia, and entered into marriage with Publilia, a young woman, rich, beautiful, and well allied, of which he gives an account, with his reasons, in a letter to Plancius, and from whom he soon after separated.

I have added these few particulars respecting Cicero, to lay a better foundation for some of his letters, which seem best entitled to be produced as specimens of his style and manner in this species of composition. Among the letters of his friends to him, none are more worthy of notice than that which was written to him by Servius Sulpicius on the death of his beloved daughter, Tullia, the wife of Dolabella, at the age of thirty-two. She died in childbed, after having been divorced from her husband, on account of the incompatibility of their sentiments and characters. Cæsar wrote to him on this sad occasion, as did also Marcus Brutus, of whose letter he thus writes in a letter to Atticus:—"Bruti litteræ scriptæ, et prudenter et amice; multas tamen mihi lacrymas, attulerunt." But the letter of Sulpicius has been greatly extolled for its feeling and elegance.

filled, and adorned it with figures of brass, which, being defaced and covered with sand, were afterwards restored by the Emperor Hadrian. See the grand *Annals* in Lucan, l. ix.

SERV. SULPICIUS TO M. T. CICERO.

WHEN word was brought me of the death of your daughter Tullia, the news affected me exceedingly, as it was natural it should do, being an affliction which I looked upon as shared between us. Had I been with you at the moment of your loss, I should have mixed my sorrow with yours. Although this is but a miserable and poor consolation, coming as it must from near friends and relations, who being in the same affliction with the bereaved person, cannot administer comfort without adding their own tears, so that they may seem rather to need comfort themselves, than to be capable of giving it to others; nevertheless, I resolved in a few words to write to you such thoughts as have come into mind upon this occasion. Not that I imagine that what I could suggest had not occurred to your own mind, but because I considered that, in the present distressed state of your spirits, your attention might not be sufficiently drawn to them. How is it that your grief has taken so violent a hold upon you? Consider how fortune has hitherto dealt with us; that those things have been taken from us which ought to be as dear to us as our children—our country, our eminence, our dignity, and our honours. To such a weight of grief, can this one sorrow be felt as an addition? How can a mind exercised in these trials be otherwise than callous, and disposed to think all other things of inferior moment?

But is it for what your daughter has been deprived of that you feel such sorrow? Alas, how often must the reflection occur to you, for indeed it has to me, that, in times like these, those are not the least mercifully dealt with who are permitted without much suffering to pass from life to death. For what was there in the state in which things were at her death which could make life very desirable to your daughter? What present happiness, what hope of the future, what mental tranquillity? Was it desirable to *her* that she might pass her days in marriage with some young man of high quality;

granting that you might have had it in your power to select a son-in-law from among the Roman youth suitable to your own dignity, to whose fidelity you might deem it safe to commit your child? Or was it *your* desire that she should bear children, whom she might have seen with delight prospering in the commonwealth, in the enjoyment of their paternal fortunes; who might rise in succession to all the honours of the state, and use the liberty to which they were born in the protection of their friends and clients? I ask, which of these things was not taken away before it was given? But you will say, it is after all a sad thing to lose one's children. It is doubtless an evil. Yet it is a greater evil to live and endure these things. Let me mention to you a circumstance which brought to my mind not a little comfort, and which may, perhaps, tend somewhat to soften your grief. On my return from Asia, while I was sailing from *Ægina* towards *Megara*, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me. *Ægina* was behind me, *Megara* before me, *Piræus* on the right, on the left, *Corinth*: which towns were once in a most flourishing state, and now lie before our eyes, sad spectacles of ruin and desolation? Alas! I thought within myself, shall we poor perishing mortals grieve and fret if one of us is removed from this scene by a natural death, or by the hand of violence, when in this narrow space the carcasses of so many cities lie stretched in ruin before us? And thus I expostulated with myself,—Will you not command yourself, *Servius*, and remember that you are born a man? Believe me, I found myself not a little strengthened by this meditation. If you are pleased with it, call to view the same scene, and draw the same reflections from it. Think what numbers of illustrious men have lately perished in one short period: how much the strength of the empire has been impaired: how all the provinces have been convulsed: and because the fleeting breath of one little woman hath gone out of her, will you suffer yourself to be so overcome by grief?—who, if she had not died at this time, must have resigned her breath in a few short years by the common lot of her being.

But call off your thoughts from these subjects to the proper consideration of your own character and personal dignity, and the duties which are implied in that consideration. Remember, your daughter lived as long as life was worth enjoying: that she lived as long as the republic lived; had seen her father prætor, consul, augur; had been married to some of the noblest of the Roman youth; had experienced every good of life; and when the republic died, died herself. What reason is there then either for you or her to complain of fortune on this account? In fine, do not forget that you are Cicero; one who has always been accustomed to advise and give counsel to others; nor act like those physicians who, while they affect to cure the diseases of other men, are unable to cure their own, but turn to your own profit the lesson which, in the same case, you would give to others. There is no sorrow so great as not to be alleviated by length of time; but it would be disgraceful in you to wait for that time, and not to anticipate it by your own wisdom. Moreover, if there be any knowledge in the departed of what passes here, such was her affection and piety towards you, that she cannot but lament to see you so afflict yourself. Make a sacrifice, therefore, of your grief to your deceased daughter, to your friends, to your companions and associates, who are all the unhappy witnesses of your sorrow. Sacrifice it to your country, that it may yet have the benefit of your assistance and advice. Finally, since we are come to that pass, that we have no resource but in resignation, take care you do not cause it to be suspected that you are all the while not so much bewailing the loss of your daughter as the state of the times and the victories of certain persons.

I am ashamed to write any more, lest I should appear to want confidence in your good sense. Therefore with this one proposition I will bring my letter to an end. We have sometimes seen you bear your prosperity nobly, with great honour and credit to yourself; let us now see that you are able, with the same equanimity, to bear adverse fortune, and without feeling it harder to be endured than it really is, so that among

All your virtues in this one you will be found wanting. As to myself, when I shall be certified that your spirits are more composed, I will transmit to you full intelligence touching the state of this province.

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Servius Sulpicius, the writer of the letter above produced, was at the time of his writing it the ablest lawyer in Rome. The story told of the incident which gave the first impulse to his studies is this:—Having occasion to take the opinion of Mucius Scaevola on some legal point, he was so slow in comprehending what was said to him, that Mucius could not forbear remonstrating with him on the discredit he brought upon himself as a patrician and pleader of causes, by his ignorance of legal principles. He was so stung with the reproach, that, from that time, he betook himself with such eagerness and perseverance to the study of the law, that he made himself the best lawyer in Rome, and left behind him near one hundred and eighty books written by himself on different legal subjects.

He was, moreover, a most upright and amiable man, and well deserved the elegant eulogy pronounced on him by Cicero in the senate. He died in the service of the republic, being carried off by a fatal sickness while proceeding, much against his will, and notwithstanding his bodily infirmity, on an embassy from the senate to M. Antony, then besieging Modena, with L. Piso and L. Philippus, his two colleagues in that commission. At the earnest application of Cicero, the senate decreed to him a public funeral, sepulchre, and statue. His statue of brass was remaining in the rostra of Augustus in the third century A. C.

None of the correspondents of Cicero stood out in these trying times in greater prominence and dignity than Marcus Claudius Marcellus. He was an intimate friend of Servius Sulpicius, who, when consul with him in the year of Rome 702, contributed greatly to moderate the fierce spirit of his less considerate and prudent colleague. Marcellus was, how-



ever, a person of eminent worth, and was exceeded by none of that age in the characteristics of Roman greatness. But a certain haughtiness of temper tarnished the lustre of his other qualities. In the effort to sustain the ancient glory of his race he was too little observant of the political aspect of the times, too stern and unbending in his maxims, to afford the state any seasonable aid in its emergencies, while a licentious, worn out, and shattered democracy was hastening to the maturity of its fate in a sanguinary despotism. Sulpicius held Marcellus in the greatest esteem, as second only to Cicero in the noblest faculties of an orator. He was a most determined opposer of Cæsar, having moved the senate for several decrees against him; but was pardoned by him at the intercession of the senate. After the battle of Pharsalia, Marcellus had retired to Mitylene in Lesbos, and was there living with so much satisfaction to himself in the cultivation of letters and philosophy, that he was with difficulty persuaded to come to Rome to take the benefit of the dictator's pardon.

Cicero, in a letter to Sulpicius, thus relates the proceeding in the senate:—"Upon the mention of Marcellus by Piso, his brother, Caius, having thrown himself at Cæsar's feet, all rose up and approached Cæsar in a supplicating manner. In short, this day's business appeared to me in so becoming a light, that I could not help fancying I saw the form of the old republic recovering its life and beauty. When all, therefore, who were asked their opinions before me, had returned thanks to Cæsar, though I had resolved to maintain an entire silence, not from insensibility, but from the sense of my lost dignity, my resolution was overcome by Cæsar's greatness of mind, and I gave thanks to him in a long speech; by which conduct I fear I may have parted with that honourable ease and quiet which was my only solace in these evil days. I have hitherto avoided giving him offence, and if I had always continued silent, he would have construed it as a proof of my taking the republic to be ruined; but, for the future, I shall speak seldom, to secure, at the same time, his good will and a quiet time for my own studies."

While Marcellus was at Mitylene, resolving to spend the remainder of his days in a studious retreat from the distractions of the republic, Brutus paid him a visit, and found him in the enjoyment of great mental quietude and dignified tranquillity, inwardly sustained by conscious integrity, and externally graced by the society of the most eminent scholars and philosophers of Greece; and so pleased was Brutus with all the circumstances which he found thus surrounding and forming the character of his accomplished friend, that, in a strain of compliment to be remembered for its elegance, he took his leave, seeming, as he said, to be going himself into exile, rather than to be leaving a banished friend.

It appears that Cicero wrote to Marcellus, at Mitylene, an account of the manner in which Cæsar's pardon for him had been obtained, accompanying that narrative with an urgent request that he would meet the gracious act of Cæsar with an equal grace in the manner of his acceptance of it. That letter of Cicero has not been preserved: but it is clear, from Marcellus's answer, that it contained the most friendly expressions of congratulation. The fine letter it drew from Marcellus in reply (the only one by the same hand which has come down to us), treats the fact communicated by Cicero with a haughty indifference, acknowledging it as a subject of congratulation only for the testimony it bore to the friendship of Cicero, of the value of which he professes to be in the highest degree sensible.

M. MARCELLUS TO M. CICERO.

You cannot but see that on every occasion, but particularly in the present, the highest value is set by me on your authority and advice. When my affectionate brother, Caius Marcellus, not only advised me, but entreated me, to act as you recommend, his persuasions were of no avail, till your opinion and advice, by their superior weight, made them effectual. Your letter distinctly shews me how this affair was transacted. I feel very sensibly the kindness of your congratulations, which

I know proceed from an excellent spirit. Among the few friends and relations who have sincerely endeavoured to promote my recall, it affords me the highest satisfaction to acknowledge the warmth and sincerity of your zeal and benevolence. Every thing else the sad state of the times has taught me to resign without reluctance; but to be deprived of the friendship of such as I esteem you to be, I should consider as making life insupportable, either in prosperous or adverse fortune. It is on the possession of this advantage that I deem myself an object of congratulation; and I shall endeavour to make it appear to you that you have done these good offices to one who is your most attached friend.

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Thus it appears that this accomplished Roman was purposing to remain in literate ease and seclusion in his retreat at Mytelene, had it not been for the urgent and repeated solicitations of Cicero, by letters to him, to return to Rome, that his country might have the benefit of his extraordinary zeal and ability, and himself the solace of his companionship in his private studies. Yielding to the arguments and persuasions of his friend, Marcellus began his journey towards Rome. He had proceeded as far as Piræus, where he spent a day with his old friend and colleague in the consulship, Servius Sulpicius, intending to pursue his voyage the next day, but, on the night of the 23rd of May, A. Urb. 708, he was killed by his friend and client, P. Magius Cilo, who immediately afterwards stabbed himself with the same poniard. The letter of Sulpicius to Cicero, informing him of this melancholy fact, is very affecting.

SERV. SULPICIUS TO M. T. CICERO.

ALTHOUGH I know that the news which I am about to tell you will be painful to you, yet since you cannot be unprepared for any of the casualties which happen to all of us by nature or accident, I have thought it proper to send you a

circumstantial account of what has just taken place. I came from Epidaurus to Piræus on the 22nd instant, where I stayed all that day to enjoy the company of my colleague Marcellus. The next day I parted from him, intending to go from Athens into Bœotia, in order to finish what remained of my jurisdiction. He was preparing, as he said, to sail for Italy. On the day following, about four o'clock in the morning, when I was about to set out from Athens, my friend, P. Posthumius, came to tell me that Marcellus had been stabbed by his companion P. Magius Cilo after supper, having received two wounds, one in his stomach, the other in his head, near the ear, but that he hoped still he might recover. That Magius had then killed himself; and that Marcellus had sent him to inform me of what had happened, and to desire that I would bring some physicians to him. I collected some, and proceeded with them before break of day; but when I was come near Piræus, a servant of Acidinus met me with a note from his master, to acquaint me that Marcellus had expired a little before day. Thus perished by the ruthless hand of a most detestable assassin this illustrious man. He whom his enemies had spared from respect to his virtues received his death from the hand of a friend. I proceeded, however, to his pavilion, where I found two of his freedmen and a few of his slaves. All the rest, they said, had fled in the greatest terror, dreading<sup>3</sup> the consequences of the murder of their master. I was obliged to carry his body with me into the city, in the same litter in which I came, and by my own servants, where I provided as splendid a funeral for him as Athens could supply; but I could not prevail with the Athenians to allow a place for his interment within the city walls, which, they said, they were forbidden by their religion to permit; but they readily granted what was the next honour,—permission to bury him in any of the gymnasia I might choose for the purpose. I selected a

<sup>3</sup> It seems that when a Roman was murdered in his own house, his domestic slaves were punishable with death. See Tacit. Ann. xiv. 42.

place, therefore, the noblest in the world, the school of academy. There I consumed his body, and took care that the Athenians should erect a marble monument to him on the same place. Thus have I faithfully performed to him, living and dead, every duty that could be required at the hands of him who was his colleague, and his relation.

Sulpicius, in the letter above produced, suggests no cause for the barbarous act of Magius, and his self-destruction, which immediately followed: his motive is left entirely to conjecture. That of Cicero was, that being oppressed with debts, he had been urging Marcellus, who was his surety for some part of them, to pay the whole, and that being peremptorily refused, in the madness of disappointment he killed his patron. It has been attributed to other reasons; Valerius says it arose from jealousy at seeing others preferred to himself. Magius was of a family who had borne public offices, and had himself been quæstor.

Marcellus was distinguished by a determined opposition to Cæsar; Matus, another of Cicero's accomplished friends, was no less remarkable for his steady attachment to Cæsar. Among the familiar letters of Cicero and his correspondents, that which he wrote to Matus, and the answer returned are pleasing epistolary specimens, and are the more interesting as being the principal documents whereby the character of Matus has been preserved to us.

Matus appears from certain incidental notices of him to have been conspicuous in his day for his elegant attainments.<sup>4</sup> He seems to have found much amusement in writing poetry, in which he is referred to as having shewn a refined judgment in the use of words. His taste for gardening is also recorded. Cicero bears testimony to his varied accomplishments, and makes particular allusion to his social and colloquial talents. He was a principal conductor of the games in honour of Venus,

<sup>4</sup> See *Aul. Gell.* vi. 6; ix. 14; xv. 25; xx. 9. *Columel.* xii. 44. *Plin.* *Hist.* xii. 2; xv. 14.



celebrated by Octavius, after the death of Julius Cæsar, in accomplishment of a vow made by that conqueror after the battle of Pharsalia, which action gave great displeasure to the republican party, and among others to Cicero. Matius long survived the conflict which succeeded to the death of Cæsar, and became distinguished among the familiar friends of Augustus; at whose court, however, he declined all public business and official dignities, being devoted to the enjoyments of a literary retirement. He is said to have been the first who taught the art of inoculating and propagating fruit trees, and to have introduced the method and practice of disposing and (it must be owned to the discredit of his taste) of cutting trees and groves into regular forms.

Cicero, in a letter to Matius, written after the part taken by him in the celebration of the games above mentioned, comments with great delicacy upon that and his other acts by which he had testified his attachment to his best friend. "As the dignity of your character," he observes, "draws upon you the attention of all the world, the malevolence of mankind will sometimes put severer constructions upon your actions than they deserve. You cannot be ignorant that if Cæsar was really a tyrant, as I think he was, there are two ways in which your duty may be viewed. It may be considered, and this is the view I commonly take, that you shewed a very commendable fidelity, in displaying your affection to your departed friend; and on the other hand, it may be said, and is indeed alleged, that the liberties of our country ought to be preferred to the life of any friend. I would you had heard with what zeal I have been accustomed to defend you in these discussions. But there are two things especially for which you are principally deserving of praise, and of which none speak more frequently and heartily than myself, which is this—that you, of all Cæsar's friends, were the most active, both in recommending pacific measures, and moderation in the use of victory; in which all agree with me."

The letter of Matius, in answer to Cicero, is remarkable among epistolary compositions for its grace, urbanity, and spirit.

## MATIUS TO CICERO.

YOUR letter gave me great satisfaction, by shewing me that you retain that favourable opinion of me which it has been my wish and hope to secure: and though I never entertain any doubt of it, yet the high value I set upon it has made me very solicitous that it should be kept inviolate. I was conscious to myself that I had done nothing that could reasonably give offence to any candid and honest man. I was, therefore, slow to believe that a person of your highly cultivated mind could be induced too hastily to give ear to anything thrown out against me,—against one especially who has always been actuated by the kindest feelings towards you. Since this then is the exact state in which I wished things to be, I will now proceed to answer all those misdemeanors laid to my charge, against which you, out of your singular goodness and friendship have, as it was to be expected you would, often defended me. I am not unacquainted with what has been said against me since Cæsar's death. It is made a crime in me, that I lament the loss of an intimate friend, and grieve that the man I loved is no more. They say that private friendship ought to give place to the interests of one's country, as if they had already made it appear that his death was a benefit to the republic. But I will not disguise the truth; I will confess I have not yet attained to that height in the scale of wisdom. Nor yet did I follow Cæsar in the late dissensions, but I followed my friend, whom, though not altogether satisfied with what was doing, I could not desert. I never approved of the civil war, or the cause of it, but laboured with the utmost assiduity to stifle it in its birth. In consistency with these sentiments, I did not seek to avail myself of the victory to advance or enrich myself; an advantage which others, who had less interest with him than I, abused to great excess.

In truth, instead of gaining by Cæsar, I have been a loser

by him : having suffered in my private fortune by his law,<sup>a</sup> to which the greatest part of those who now rejoice at his death owed their very continuance in the city. I laboured to obtain pardon for the conquered with the same zeal I should have felt had I been pleading for my own life. Can I then, who have been anxious for the safety of all, forbear to reflect with sorrow and indignation on the destruction of him whose clemency has been so displayed, especially when the very same men who were the cause of rendering him obnoxious were the authors of his death ? But, say these men, you shall have reason to repent for daring to condemn what we have done. O unheard insolence ! Is it to be allowed to some to glory in a deed, which it is not permitted to others to deplore with impunity. Even slaves are allowed to fear, rejoice, and grieve at their own wills, not at another's dictation : which privilege, these men, who call themselves the authors of liberty, are endeavouring to wrest from us by the force of terror. But they shall not prevail. No danger shall frighten me from the performance of my duty and the offices of humanity.

I have never thought an honourable death was to be shunned, but often rather to be courted. But why are they censured against me for wishing they may repent of their deed ? Wish I do, that that death may be the cause of regret to all concerned in it. But I ought, they say, to wish only for the preservation of the public liberty, as a good citizen. In my past life and future hopes do not, without my asserting give security for my zeal, I do not trouble myself to establish by words. If you think that it is the clear interest of one in these circumstances, that what is right should be done, be sure that I am not so foolish as to take part with any ill-designing persons. Can I who took this safe course in my youth, when a mistake in this matter would have been pardonable, undo what has been done, and desert my principles in my declining age ? I will not do it. Neither will I do anything that

<sup>a</sup> Caesar caused a law to be enacted for the relief of those who had contracted debts before the commencement of the civil war.

may unnecessarily give offence, unless it be an offence to lament the sad fate of a most dear friend and a most accomplished man. Were I disposed to act differently, I should not conceal my acts or intentions, lest I should at once incur the disgrace of doing what was wrong, and the character of a coward for my dissimulation. True, I undertook the management of the games which Octavius exhibited in honour of his uncle's victories; but that was a private duty, and not a public concern. It was what it became me to perform to the memory and honour of my dead friend; and what I could not therefore deny to a youth of the fairest hopes, and most worthy of Cæsar. But I go often also to the consul Antony to pay my compliments. Yet you will find those very men go oftener to ask and receive favours who reflect upon me for it, as indicating a disaffection to my country. But what arrogance is this? that, when Cæsar never interfered with my visiting whom I would,—even those whom he had no regard for, they who have deprived me of him should attempt by their censures to prevent me from placing my esteem where I think proper. But I do not distrust the integrity of my life, as insufficient to bear me up against all these calumnies. Nor will I suppose that they who dislike me for my attachment to Cæsar would not rather choose a friend of my disposition than their own.

If I could have my wish, I would spend what remains to me of life in retirement at Rhodes. But if the chances of life should oppose this wish, my endeavour will be so to pass my days in Rome, as to have an interest in the maintenance of what is just and right.

To Trebatius I feel very grateful for conveying to me the assurance of your sincere and friendly sentiments towards me, and for supplying me with fresh reasons for cultivating the friendship of one whom my heart has always been disposed to love. Farewell. And continue to bear me in your affection

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Brutus's letters to Cicero have been loaded by Marklam

contemptuous epithets. He has called them "silly which one cannot read without indignation," and Cicero has censured him, as "Churlish, unmannerly, and ignorant in his correspondence with him, and as regarding neither what, nor to whom, he was writing." Some of the scenes which passed between these great men, while the consequences of the assassination of Julius Cæsar were in such a suspense between the contending factions, (Brutus and Cassius being masters of the eastern provinces, and the destiny of the young and wily Octavius, in a rapid progress to its accomplishment,) bring the characters of Brutus and Cicero into strong contrast. Octavius at the age of twenty had demanded the consulship, a claim without a warrant or precedent in the laws of the commonwealth. Neither Cicero nor any other magistrate stood forth to oppose him, though Cicero was not unsuspected of secretly favouring his designs. The opposition was, however, made by a deputation of his officers; Octavius having marched his legions into the city, it met with no opposition.

The conduct of Cicero had given offence to Brutus, who did not but remark his courtship of the young Octavius, and was far from approving of his severe proceedings against Clodius and Lepidus, whom he was doing his utmost to suppress, the better as it would seem to recommend himself to the young Cæsar, who was now rising fast to the great height of his ambition. In this state of vacillation on the part of Cicero, Atticus, as a common friend, was employed to enquire into the cause and extent of Brutus's displeasure, and he drew from Brutus the following letter, by some called one of the most precious pieces of antiquity.

## BRUTUS TO ATTICUS.

Tell me that Cicero wonders why I never take any notice of his acts. Since you require it then, and extort it from me, I will tell you what I think of them. That Cicero has been everything with the best intention I well know; for



what can I possibly be more assured of than of his good feeling towards the republic? Yet, some things he seems to have done, shall I say, Imprudently! Shall I say this of a man of all others the most prudent? or ambitiously! Of one who for the sake of the republic has not scrupled to make Antony, powerful as he is, his enemy. I am at a loss what to write except this one thing;—that the ambition and licentiousness of that boy have been encouraged, rather than repressed by Cicero; and that he carries his indulgence of him so far, as not to abstain even from reproachful language against others, and such as returns doubly upon himself: since he has taken away the life of more than one,<sup>o</sup> and must confess *himself* to be an assassin, before he can reproach Casca for what he has done, and treat Casca as Bestia once treated him. Or because we are not boasting every moment of the ides of March, as he is of his nones of December, has he for that reason any better pretext for censuring our most laudable act, than Bestia and Clodius had for inveighing against his consulship? Cicero boasts that he in his gown has sustained the war against Antony: but of what service is that to me if the succession to Antony's place be claimed as the reward for oppressing Antony? and if the avenger of that evil has been the author of another which is likely to be more firmly established, and to take a deeper root, if we suffer it? As if all he is doing was done not from fear of having a master, but of having Antony for his master. But for my part, I cannot think myself obliged to a man who, as long as he does not serve an angry lord, has no quarrel with servitude itself; nay, decrees triumphs and pay, and every kind of honour to another. It is a reproach to any man to desire such a condition of life as he has taken upon himself. Is this the part of a consular? This of Cicero? Since you would not suffer me to be silent, you will read what must necessarily make you uneasy, for I feel uneasiness enough in writing it.

<sup>o</sup> Lentulus, Cathegus, Statilius, Gabinius, Ceparius, Catiline's accomplices, were put to death without a formal hearing before the people, required by an old law of Portius Læca, a tribune, and a later one of C. Gracchus.

or am I ignorant what your sentiments are with regard to the republic; which, desperate as it is, you think possible to be retrieved. Nor in truth, Atticus, do I blame *you*; for many years, your principles, your children make you averse to action: which I perceived also from the account of our friend Cælius. But to return to Cicero. What difference is there between him and Salvidienus;<sup>7</sup> or what more would Salvidienus himself decree to Octavius? He is still afraid, you will say, of the remains of the civil war. But can anybody be so afraid of a routed enemy,<sup>8</sup> as to think neither the power of one who is at the head of a conquering army, nor the rashness of a boy at all to be feared? Or does he do all this because he thinks that everything ought freely to be given up to him, on the account of his great power.<sup>9</sup>

O the strange folly of fear! to be so cautious of shunning what we are afraid of, that, instead of avoiding it, as we might perhaps have done, we invite and draw it upon ourselves. We have too great a dread of death, of exile, and of poverty. These Cicero regards as the chief ills of life; and as long as he can find people who will grant him what he desires,—who will respect and applaud him,—he has no objection to slavery, provided it be an honourable one—if any thing can be honourable in a state of the most abject contumely.

Let Octavius then call him father, refer all things to him, praise, thank him; it will be seen, at last, how opposed to each other are his words and acts. For what is so opposite to the common sense of mankind as to hold any one in the place of a father who cannot be ranked in the number even of freemen? And yet all that this excellent man is aiming at, all that he is doing, tends only to this—that Octavius

<sup>7</sup> One of the zealous adherents of Octavius.

<sup>8</sup> Antony.

<sup>9</sup> When Octavius marched with his army against Antony, Cicero moved the senate to decree him the command as propretor; that he should carry on the war in conjunction with the two consuls, and that he should have a seat in the senate, with the rank of prætor. After the first battle of Mutina, they decreed him, on Cicero's motion, a thanksgiving of fifty days, with the title of Imperator, in common with the consuls.

may be kind to him. I can no longer set any value on those arts of which I know Cicero to be so great a master; for of what use to him are all the fine things that he has written with such eloquence for the liberty of his country, or on dignity, death, exile, poverty? How much better does Philippus<sup>10</sup> seem to understand these subjects, who was more reserved in his concessions to a son-in-law than Cicero to a stranger? Let him forbear, then, in his boastings to insult even our miseries. For what is it to us that Antony is vanquished, if his fall has made room only for another to possess his place? Though your letters even still speak dubiously of him.

Let Cicero, then, live on, since he can submit to it, suppliant and obnoxious; if he has no regard either to his years or his honours, or the acts of his past life. As for me, I will wage war with the thing itself; that is, with tyranny, with extraordinary commands, with every power that seeks to advance itself above the laws; nor shall any condition of servitude, how advantageous soever, divert me from it; though Antony be, as you write, an honest man; which was never my opinion of him. But as to a master, our ancestors would never endure one, though he were even a parent. If I did not love you as much as Cicero persuades himself he is beloved by Octavius, I would not have written this to you. It grieves me to think how much you are displeased, you who love all your friends so warmly, and, above all, Cicero. But assure yourself that I have abated nothing of my particular affection, though a great deal of my judgment, in favour of him: for we cannot help pronouncing upon things according to the light in which they appear to us.

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The above letter throws at once a considerable light upon the state of Rome at this crisis, and upon the character of Cicero himself; but it is difficult to see what ground it affords for the severe censure passed by Markland and Middleton

<sup>10</sup> Philippus was Octavius's father-in-law.

upon the tone and temper of Brutus's letters. Brutus, no doubt, had a very fallacious and misty perception of right and duty, but on his own principles, erroneous as they were, he stood firm and erect, and maintained a courageous consistency, or rather an invincible pertinacity: and after such a deed of atrocity as that in which his hands had been engaged, one cannot but be surprized to find the traces neither of ambition nor cruelty in any part of his subsequent conduct.

In a letter to Brutus, written some little time after that which has been produced, Cicero, to whom Brutus had intimated his disapprobation of his conduct, explained and vindicated the course he had pursued since the death of Julius Cæsar to his suspecting friend.

CICERO TO BRUTUS.<sup>11</sup>

You have Messala with you. How is it possible, therefore, for me to explain by letter, though ever so accurately composed, the present state of our public transactions more precisely than he, who both knows them all more perfectly, and can relate and describe them to you more elegantly than any other man? For do not imagine, Brutus, (though there is no occasion for me to write what you know already yourself, but I cannot pass over in silence such an assemblage of all excellent qualities) do not imagine, I say, that for probity, constancy, care, and zeal for the republic, there is any one equal to him; so that eloquence, in which he wonderfully excels, hardly finds a place amongst his other praises; and even in his eloquence wisdom is its most conspicuous quality; with so much judgment and art has he formed himself to the truest manner of speaking. His industry, all the while, is so remarkable, and he spends so much of his time in study, that he seems to owe but little to his natural abilities, which nevertheless are of the highest order. But I am carried too far by

<sup>11</sup> This letter is also inserted in this chapter, as belonging more immediately to the transactions under review.

my love for him; for it is not the purpose of this epistle to praise Messala, especially to Brutus, to whom his virtue is not less known than to myself; and to whom those studies, which I am commending, are still more known. Of this man I could not take leave without regret, but I comforted myself with reflecting, that, by going to you as to my second self, he was at once discharging a duty and pursuing the truest path of glory.

I come now, after a long interval, to consider a certain letter of yours, wherein, while you allow me to have done well in many things, you find fault with me for being too free and prodigal in conferring honours. This is *your* charge against me in this particular; while others accuse me of too great severity in punishing: you, perhaps, may think I am chargeable with both these faults. If so, my desire is that the reasons by which I am influenced in both these respects may be fully apprehended by you. Not that I mean to justify myself by the maxim of Solon, the wisest of the seven, and the only legislator of them all; who used to say, that "the public weal was comprised in two things,—rewards and punishments," in which, as in every thing, there is a certain medium and temperament to be observed. But it is not my design, at this time, to discuss so great a subject; yet I think it not improper to lay open the motives of my opinions, and votes, in the senate, from the beginning of this war.

After the death of Cæsar, and those your memorable ideas of March, you cannot forget, Brutus, what I declared to have been omitted by you, and what a tempest I saw hanging over the republic. You had freed us from a great plague; wiped off a great stain from the Roman people, and acquired to yourselves divine glory; yet all the equipage of kingly power was still left to Lepidus and Antony: the one inconstant, the other vicious; both of them afraid of peace, and enemies to the public quiet. While these were wishing to raise fresh disturbances in the state, we had no troops at hand which we could oppose to them, though the whole city was unanimous in asserting its liberty. I was then thought too violent; whilst you, perhaps more wisely, withdrew yourself from that



city which you had delivered, and refused the help of all Italy, which offered to arm itself in your cause. Wherefore, when I saw the city in the hands of rebels, and oppressed by the arms of Antony, and that neither you nor Cassius could be safe in it, I thought it time for me to quit it too. For a city overpowered by traitors, without the means of relieving itself, is a wretched spectacle. Yet my mind, always the same, and ever fixed on the love of my country, could not bear the thought of leaving it in its distress. In the midst, therefore, of my voyage to Greece, and in the very season of the Etesian winds, when an uncommon southern gale, as if displeased with my determination, had driven me back to Italy, I found you at Velia, and was greatly concerned at it. For you were retreating, Brutus; were retreating, I say, since your stoics will not allow their wise men to fly. As soon I as came to Rome, I exposed myself to the wickedness and rage of Antony, whom I had exasperated against me; and then I began to enter into measures, in the very spirit of the Brutus's (for such are peculiar to your blood), for the delivery of the republic. I shall omit the long recital of what followed, since it relates to myself, and observe only that this young Cæsar, by whom, if we are willing to confess the truth, we subsist at this day, is the offspring of my counsels. I decreed him no honours, Brutus, but what were due; none but what were necessary. For when we first began to recover some liberty; when the divine virtue of Decimus Brutus lay yet undisclosed in its true force, and our whole defence was in the boy who had delivered our necks from Antony, what honour was not really due to him? Though I gave him nothing yet but words of praise, and even those in a moderate degree. I decreed him, indeed, a legal command,<sup>12</sup> which, though it seemed honourable to one of his age, was yet necessary to one who had an army: for what is an army without a delegated command? Philippus decreed him a statue; Servius the privilege of suing for offices before the legal time; which time was shortened afterwards by Servilius. Nothing was then thought

<sup>12</sup> As *proprætor*, with the rank of *prætor* in the senate.

too much. But men are apt, I know not how, to be more liberal in fear than grateful in success.

When Decimus Brutus was delivered from the siege, a day of all others the most joyous to the city, and which happened also to be his birthday, I decreed that his name should for ever be written opposite to that day in the public calendars: in which I followed the example of our ancestors, who paid the same honours to a woman, Larentia, at whose altar your priests performed the sacred rites in the Velabrum. By giving this to Decimus Brutus, my design was to fix in the calendars a perpetual memorial of a most gratifying victory. But I perceived on that day that there was more malevolence than gratitude in many of the senate. During these days I poured out honours (since you will have it so) on the deceased Hirtius and Pansa, and on Aquila also; and who can find fault with it but those who, when fear is once over, forget their past danger. But besides the grateful remembrance of past services, there was a view in it which reached to posterity: for I was desirous there should remain an eternal monument of the public hatred of our most cruel enemies. I suspect there is one thing which does not please you; for it does not please your people here, who, though excellent men, have but little experience in public affairs,—that I decreed an ovation to Cæsar: but for my part, though I may perhaps be mistaken, (nor am I yet one of those who are the most pleased always with what originates with themselves<sup>13</sup>) I cannot but think that I have advised nothing more prudent during the war. Why it is so is not proper to be explained, lest I should be thought to have been more provident than grateful in this proceeding. But even this is too much. Let us pass to other things. I decreed honours to Decimus Brutus; decreed them to Plancus. To be attracted by glory is the characteristic of great minds: and that senate is wise who adopts any means, provided they are honourable, by which any one may be gained to the service of the republic. But I am blamed in the case of Lepidus, to whom I had raised a statue in the rostra,

<sup>13</sup> The character given by Cicero of Brutus in some of his letters to Atticus.

which I presently threw down again. My view was to reclaim him by that honour from desperate measures ; but the madness of the inconstant man succeeded against my prudence : nor was there so much harm in erecting as there was good in demolishing that statue.

But I have said enough concerning honours, and must now say a word or two about punishments : for I have often observed from your letters that you are fond of acquiring a reputation for clemency, by your treatment of those whom you have conquered in war. I can imagine nothing to be done by you but what is wisely done : but to omit the punishment of wickedness, which we call pardoning, though it may be allowable in other cases, I take to be pernicious in this war. For of all the civil wars which have happened in my memory, there was not one in which, what side soever got the better, there would not have remained some form of a commonwealth ; but in this, what sort of a republic we are likely, if victorious, to have, I would not pretend to affirm ; but if we are conquered we are sure to have none. My votes therefore were severe against Antony ; severe against Lepidus ; not from any spirit of revenge, but to deter wicked citizens from making war against their country, and to leave an example to posterity, that none hereafter might be disposed to imitate such rashness. Yet this very vote was not more mine than it was everybody's ; in which there seems, I own, to be something cruel, that the punishment should reach to children who have done nothing to deserve it ; but this condition of things is ancient, and belongs to the constitution of all states. Themistocles' children were reduced to want. And since the same punishment falls upon all citizens condemned for public crimes, how was it possible for us to be more gentle towards the enemies of the state ? For what reason can that man have to complain of me, who, if he had conquered, must needs confess that he would have treated me with even greater severity.

You have now the grounds of my opinions, as far as they relate to the charge of rewards and punishments : for, as to other points, you have heard, I suppose, what my sentiments and votes have been : the mention of them, therefore, is not so

necessary. What I am about to mention, Brutus, is greatly so; that you come with your army to Italy as soon as possible. There is the utmost expectation of you. Whenever you set foot in Italy, all the world will run to you. For, whether it be our lot to conquer (as we had already done, if Lepidus had not been desirous to overturn all, and to perish, himself with his friends) there will be a great want of your authority to settle some form of a civil state amongst us; or, if there be any danger or struggle still behind, our greatest hope is in your authority, as well as in the strength of your army. But hasten to us, I beseech you; for you know how much depends on opportunity; how much on dispatch. Of the diligence I shall use in the care of your sister's children, you will be informed, I hope, by the letters of your mother and sister; in whose cause I have more regard to your will, which is ever most dear to me, than, as some think, to my own constancy. But it is my desire both to be and to appear constant in nothing so much as in loving you.

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The last inserted letter may be regarded as a very clear exposition of the state of public affairs, and of Cicero's part in them, at the commencement of the civil wars which immediately succeeded the death of Julius Cæsar; and may be taken as a fair specimen of his manner of expressing himself on civil and political events, and the actors in them. He soon began to perceive that Octavius was taking a course which, under the pretext of revenging his uncle's death, was tending to scatter the elements of freedom, and set up his own supremacy upon the ruins of the commonwealth.

It then became the great object of Cicero to turn the young man from his purpose, and effect a reconciliation between him and Brutus, and, if possible, to persuade him to acquiesce in the amnesty which had been decreed by the senate. Atticus, the common friend of both, thinking he should thereby gratify Brutus, sent him what Cicero had written on this subject. But the efforts of Cicero in this behalf thus made known to Brutus by their friend Atticus, provoked the high displeasure

of Brutus, who expressed these feelings to Cicero in such plain terms, as to subject him to the charge, as before observed, of writing with arrogance and asperity.

Of the personage, with the mention of whom Cicero began the important letter last above introduced, Publius Valerius Messala Corvinus, it is but due praise to observe that he was one of the most virtuous and accomplished characters recorded in Roman annals. Having survived these sanguinary disturbances, during which his conduct was equally marked by integrity and discretion, he became a principal ornament of the court of Augustus. He adhered to the cause of expiring liberty till it was buried with Brutus his friend, and after the battle of Philippi surrendered to Antony; but being thrown wholly on the side of Octavius by the scandal of Antony's life, he distinguished himself at the battle of Actium on the conquering side. He had been a scholar of Cicero, under whose precepts and example he rose to be one of the finest orators which Rome has produced, to which accomplishment he added a remarkable proficiency in all the liberal arts.

## BRUTUS TO CICERO.

I HAVE read a small part of your letter to Octavius, transmitted to me by Atticus. Your zeal and concern for my safety gave me no new pleasure, for it is not only our common, but our daily news to hear something which you have said or done with your usual fidelity in support of my honour and dignity. Yet that same part of your letter affected me with the most sensible grief which my mind could possibly receive. For you compliment *him* so highly for his services to the republic, and in a strain so suppliant and abject that—what shall I say? I am ashamed of the wretched state to which we are reduced; yet it must be said, you recommend my safety to him, (to which what death is not preferable?) and thus make it manifest that our servitude is not yet abolished, but our master only changed. Recollect your words, and deny them, if you dare, to be the prayers of a subject to his king. There



is one thing, you say, which is required and expected from him—that he would allow those citizens to live in safety, of whom all honest men and the people of Rome think well. But what if he will not allow it? shall we be the less safe for that? It is better not to be safe, than to be saved by him. For my part, I can never think all the gods so averse to the preservation of the Roman people, that Octavius must be entreated for the life of any one citizen; not to say for the deliverers of the world. These are the lofty terms in which I have a pleasure in declaring myself, and it becomes me to use this language to those who know not what to fear from, or what to ask of, any one. Can you allow Octavius to possess this power, and yet be his friend? Or if you have any value for me, would you wish to see me at Rome; when it behoves me first to be recommended to this boy, that he would permit me to be there? What reason can you have to thank him, if you think it necessary to beg of him that he would suffer us to live in safety? Or is it to be considered a kindness that he chooses to see himself rather than Antony, in the condition to have such petitions presented to him? One may supplicate, indeed, the successor, but what need is there to supplicate the abolisher of a tyranny, that those who have deserved well of the republic may be safe? It was this weakness and despair, not more blameable, indeed, in you than in all, which first incited Cæsar to the ambition of reigning; and after his death encouraged Antony to think of seizing his place; and which has now raised this boy so high, that you judge it necessary to address your supplications to him for the preservation of men such as we are; and that we are to be saved only by the mercy of one, scarcely yet a man, and by no other means. But if we had remembered ourselves to be Romans, these infamous men would not be more daring to aim at dominion than we to repel it; nor would Antony be more encouraged by Cæsar's reign, than deterred by his fate. How can you, a consular senator, and the avenger of so many treasons, (by suppressing which, you have but postponed our ruin, I fear, for a time) reflect on what you have done, and yet approve

these things, or bear them so tamely, as to seem to approve them? For what particular quarrel had you with Antony? No other, but that he assumed all this to himself; that our lives should be begged of him;—that we from whom he had received liberty, should hold our safety in precarious dependence upon his will;—that the republic should be at his disposal. You thought it necessary to take arms to arrest his tyranny. But was this done only, that a stop being put to him, we might carry our submission to another, who might condescend to be put in his place; or was it that the republic might be its own mistress: unless after all, our quarrel was not with slavery, but with the conditions of it. No doubt, we might have had an easy master in Antony, and whatever share with him we pleased, could we have been content with such a state of things: for what could he have denied to those whose tolerance would have been the best support of his domination. But nothing was of such value to us as to be worth the sacrifice of our fidelity and liberty. This very boy, whom the name of Cæsar seems to stimulate against the slayers of Cæsar, how would he value (if there were really room to treat with him,) our help towards the attainment of his objects; we being content to live, and to be rich, and to be called consuls. But Cæsar would then have perished in vain. For what reason have we to rejoice at his death, if still our lot is to be slaves? Let others be as unconcerned as they will; but may the powers of heaven sooner take all from me, than the determination not to allow to the heir of the man I killed what I would not allow to the man himself. No, nor would I suffer my father, were he living, to possess a power above the laws and the senate.

Can you persuade yourself, that any one can be free under him, without whose leave there is no place for us in that city? Or how is it possible for you, after all, to obtain what you ask? You ask that he would allow us to be safe. Shall we then receive safety when we receive life? But how can we receive it, if we first part with our honour and our liberty? Do you fancy that to live at Rome is to be safe? It is the

thing, and not the place, which must secure that to me; for I was never safe, while Cæsar lived, till I had resolved on that attempt: nor can I be an exile any where as long as I continue to abhor slavery and contumely beyond all other evils. Is it not to fall back into the same state of darkness in which we were, when he who has taken upon him the name of the tyrant must be entreated that the avengers of tyranny may be safe, while in the cities of Greece the punishment of tyrants is extended to their children? Can I ever wish to see that city or think it a city, which would not accept liberty when offered, and even forced upon it, but has more dread of the name of their late king in the person of a boy, than reliance on itself, though it has seen that very king taken off in the plenitude of his power by the virtue of a few? If you listen to me, you will no more after this recommend either me or yourself to this your Cæsar. You set a high value on the few years that remain to you at your age, if for their sake you can become a suppliant to that boy. Henceforth have a care, lest what you have done and are doing with respect to Antony, instead of being praised as the effect of magnanimity, be imputed to fear: for if you are so pleased with Octavius as to petition him for our safety, you will be thought not to have disliked a master, but to have wanted only a more friendly one.

As to your praising him for the things that he has hitherto done, I approve of it; they deserve to be praised, provided he did them to repel the power of others, not to advance his own. But when you adjudge him not only to have this power, but think you ought to submit to it so far as to entreat him that he would not destroy us, you make him too great a recompense; you give to him what the republic seemed to enjoy *through* him. Nor does it seem to occur to you, that if Octavius deserves any honours, because he makes war against Antony, that those who extirpated the very evil of which these are but the relics, can never be sufficiently requited by the Roman people, though they were to heap upon them everything in their power to bestow; but see how much stronger people's

is are than their memories; because Antony still lives,  
and is in arms.

As to Cæsar, all that could and ought to have been done  
has been done, and cannot be undone, to be done again in  
any other manner. Is then Octavius so great a man, that the  
people of Rome are to wait in suspense his judgment upon

Or are we so little, that any one man is to be entreated  
for our safety? As for me, that I may return to Rome, not  
only will I not supplicate any man, but I will restrain those  
in doing it who are disposed to do it for themselves: or I  
will remove to a distance from all such who can be slaves, and  
I think myself at Rome wherever I can live free, and shall  
not yield to you whose fond desire of life—neither age, nor honours,  
nor the example of other men's virtue can reduce. For my  
part, I shall ever think myself happy, solaced with the  
constant and perpetual conviction, that my piety to my  
country has met its reward; for what condition can be better  
than for a man supported by the recollection of noble actions,  
and in full content with his liberty, to look with indifference  
at all human things. Never will I yield to those who suffer  
themselves to be trampled upon by others, nor be conquered  
by those who submit to be conquered. I will make experi-  
ment of all things, and try every resource, nor will ever desist  
from dragging our state out of slavery. If that fortune  
send me which ought to attend me, we shall all rejoice;  
not, still I shall rejoice myself. For how can this life be  
better spent than in acts and thoughts which tend to make  
our countrymen free. I beseech you, Cicero, not to desert the  
cause through weariness or want of confidence. In repelling  
present evils have your eyes always on the future, lest it steal  
upon you before you are aware. Consider that the fortitude  
and courage with which you delivered the republic, when  
tribune, and again a consular, are nothing without constancy  
and perseverance. The case of tried, is, I own, harder than  
untried virtue. We exact services as debts in the former  
case, and if disappointed, we feel especially resentful, as  
persons deceived. Wherefore, for Cicero to withstand Antony,

though very commendable, yet because such a consul promised such a consular, nobody wondered at it: but if the same Cicero in the case of others should waver at last in that resolution, which he exerted with such firmness and greatness of mind against Antony, he would deprive himself not only of the hopes of future glory, but make even his glory past to disappear. Nothing is great in itself but that in which a determination of the judgment is apparent. Nor is it the duty of any man more than of you to shew attachment and devotion to the republic, and to be a patron of liberty called upon as you are by your abilities, by the things you have performed, by the regard and expectation of all men. Wherefore, I hold, that Octavius ought not to be asked to permit us to live in safety. Rather encourage yourself to think the city, in which you have done such great things, to be free and honourable, only so long as there are in it leaders of the people to oppose the designs of the profligate.

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If a letter deserves to be admired for the image it reflects of the writer's character, where that character is illustrious and connected with the events of a great historical period, the letter of Marcus Brutus, above produced, is one of the most noble epistolary monuments of antiquity. It wears such a stamp of stern magnanimity, that, if graduated in the scale of heathen ethics, we must admit its testimony to the greatness and worth of the man from whose pen it proceeded. We see in it a just ground for the high rank assigned to Brutus among letter-writers by Philostratus, rather than an apology for the censure of Markland or the reproaches of Cicero. He was a man holding, no doubt, most erroneous views, and contemplating his duty through the medium of a most perverse morality; how could it be otherwise under the teaching of a presumptuous philosophy, the fruit of our fallen nature? it was nevertheless the product of a mind fitted for the loftiest attainments of humanity. Had he come into the world a century later, he might have died a christian martyr.



## CHAPTER XII.

## LETTERS OF CICERO TO HIS FRIENDS.

WE come now to the more particular consideration of Cicero's own letters. The published letters of Seneca and Pliny, though possessing great merit and interest, and in some respects hardly surpassed by any specimens in the same department, either ancient or modern, are in general inferior, to the graces appropriate to this species of composition, to those of Cicero, whose glory it was to commence and consummate its characteristic excellence. Bentley, in his general character of the epistles of Phalaris, contrasts them with those of Cicero in the following terms:—"It would be endless to prosecute this part, and shew all the silliness and imperiency in the matter of the epistles. For, take them in the whole bulk, I should say they are a fardel of common places, without any life or spirit from action or circumstance. Do but cast your eye upon Cicero's letters, or any statesman's, as Phalaris was; what lively characters of men there! what descriptions of place! what notifications of time! what particularity of circumstances! what multiplicity of designs and events! When you return to those again, you feel, by the emptiness and deadness of them, that you converse with some dreaming pedant, with his elbow on his desk; not with an active ambitious tyrant, with his hand upon his sword, commanding a million of subjects." That we find in Cicero's letters lively characters of men, interesting descriptions of places, important notifications of passing things, and a multiplicity of great designs and memorable events, will not be denied by any accurate enquirer; and the scholar will as little deny that he has made his native language meet the wants of

his capacious mind with a remarkable power over its resources. His fluctuating and unstable character, no less than his vanity and love of distinction, though his moral standard was thereby considerably lowered, seemed to minister occasion to those varied forms of diction and expression in which the genius of animated letter-writing may be said to delight; while the force of his intellect gave an extraordinary expansion to the language in which he wrote, carrying it to the utmost bound which its idiom and analogies would bear. Where its native resources failed he engrafted the Greek upon it, and thus multiplied its affinities and increased its derivative stores.<sup>1</sup>

Yet was Cicero more than others sensible of the powers and beauties indigenous in his own language,—of that *αὐτοχθὺν urbanitas*, which he commends so much in his letter to Atticus.<sup>2</sup> In the Roman language a certain festivity seems to have inhered, which very imperfectly imparts itself to modern apprehension. This ancient vernacular humour must have been very sensibly appreciated by Cicero to have been thus preferred by him to the Attic salt, of which, in other places, as in his book “*De Oratore*,” he expresses his admiration.<sup>3</sup> We see, too, in this and other instances, how the particular graces of epistolary writing, after ages past in ignorance of its moral use and advantages, seemed at once to disclose themselves to the vigorous and keen capacity of this accomplished man; and to him principally we are indebted for furnishing the principles and model of an art which has

<sup>1</sup> Postea mihi placuit, eoque sum usus adolescens, ut summorum oratorum græcas orationes explicarem; quibus lectis hoc assequebar, ut, cum ea quæ legerem græce, latine redderem, non solum optimis verbis uter, et tamen usitatis, sed etiam exprimerem quædam verba imitando, quæ nova nostros essent, dummodo essent idonea. Cic. de Orat. l. i. s. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Ad. Att. l. vii. ep. 2. “Moriar si præter te quenquam reliquum habeo, in quo possim imaginem antiquæ et vernaculæ festivitatis agnoscere.” Ad Fam. l. ix. ep. 15. And again, “Accedunt non Attici, sed salsiores quam illi Atticorum, Romani veteres, atque urbani sales.”

<sup>3</sup> Dial. de Orat. l. ii. s. liv.

given a new impulse to sensibility, wit, and invention; and opened new veins of knowledge and enquiry.

The letters to Atticus, as they breathe the language of the most intimate friendship, and are full of private and confidential allusions to circumstances known only to the parties themselves, are in very many parts with difficulty interpreted and imperfectly understood, but they are worthy of a diligent perusal, as the vehicles of much valuable information respecting the characters and designs of the various actors in the closing scene of the Roman republic. The letters of Atticus have unfortunately none of them come down to us, either to throw light upon those which were written to him by Cicero, or to afford us a specimen of his polite and peaceful share in a correspondence, teeming, on the part of his friend, with disastrous details of vice and crime. The aspect of the times, indeed, frowned upon the disposition of Cicero to frequent indulgence in that sportive vein in which he was very competent to excel. In many of his letters we are agreeably struck with the gay complexion of his thoughts, and are made to regret that his overwhelming public cares left so small a part of his mind to its natural play.\* Yet, in spite of these discouragements, there is no pen of classic antiquity that has made correspondence by letter so pleasing a handmaid to knowledge and enquiry, or so interesting a medium of affectionate intercourse.

Among all the letters of Cicero there is not one which makes a fuller exposure of his extreme vanity than his celebrated letter to Luceius; while it affords a specimen of Latin composition no where excelled in the graces and delicacies of expression. These qualities have not been neglected by the last elegant translator, but in this, as in some of his other efforts to introduce Cicero to us in our own language, the energy of the original has been diluted by a needless multiplication of words, and an affected tenuity and circuitry of diction.

\* *Jocerne tecum per literas? civem, mehercule non puto esse qui temporibus his ridere possit.* Ad. Fam. l. ii. ep. iv. *Quæ enim soluto animo familiariter scribi solent, temporibus his excluduntur.* Ad. Att. l. ix. ep. iv.

It seems to have been sometimes not enough considered by him, that to depart from the words of his original for the sake of some fancied grace, is a breach of contract in a translator, and a violation of the faith to which he is pledged by his undertaking. There is a bloom belonging to original thought which an attempt to improve, is only to impair. Mr. Melmoth, both in the letters of Cicero and Pliny, has been sometimes led away by the conceit of improving upon his original; and seems to have been rather too fine a gentleman for a faithful translator. Thus, in this famous letter to Lucceius, "*Litera enim non erubescit*" is rendered "for a letter, you know, spares the confusion of a blush." And the same tendency discovers itself in other letters, where the strength and brevity of the original have been lost in expansion.<sup>5</sup>

## CICERO TO LUCCEIUS.

WHEN present with you, I have been often on the point of breaking silence on a particular subject, when a certain half-rustic shame has stopped me; which subject, when thus absent from you, I can bring forward with more boldness; for a letter does not blush. I burn with a desire incredibly strong, nor, I trust, a reprehensible one, to have my name celebrated and adorned in your writings: with which request, although you are kind enough to declare your intention of complying, yet I am sure you will make allowance for my impatience. The style and character of your writings, though always such as to make me eagerly anticipate whatever is forthcoming from your pen, have nevertheless, when they appeared, far exceeded my expectation, and have so captivated, or rather inflamed me, as to make me wish as soon as possible to be recorded by you with commendation. Neither is it only to live in the memory of the generations to come that I look forward with a certain hope of immortality; but my

<sup>5</sup> His merit, however, is very great as a pure and graceful writer, and a correct scholar, and interpreter.

bosom is inflamed with the desire of enjoying, while I live, the testimony of your authority, the credit of your kind opinion, and the flattering recommendations of your powerful pen. Nor am I ignorant, while I am writing this, how much you are engrossed with the task you have already set yourself, and the execution of your original design. But as I perceived you had almost brought to a close your history of the Italic and Marian wars, and you had told me that you were about to proceed with the rest of your undertaking, I would not be wanting to myself by neglecting to remind you to consider, whether you would choose to interweave my actions into the general texture of your performance, or, as was the practice of many of the Greek historians, as of Calisthenes, Timæus, and Polybius, who wrote their respective narratives of the siege of Troy, the Pyrrhic, and Numantine wars apart from their general histories, in detached pieces, you would prefer making the Catilinarian conspiracy the subject of a separate work. Whatever may be your determination in these respects, it will but little affect the interests of my reputation; but it will tend to the more speedy accomplishment of my wishes, if, instead of waiting till, in the prosecution of your history, you come to the period alluded to, you shall enter at once and by anticipation upon the transactions and events of that time. And, besides all this, if the whole force of your mind is engrossed by one topic and one character, I cannot but see how much more ample and graceful will probably be your whole narrative. Nor am I insensible to the immodesty of my proceeding, in imposing, in the first place, so burthensome a task upon you (for your present occupations would justify you in refusing my request), and in the next place, in asking you to honour me with your praise. What, after all, if you should happen to think that the things which I have presented to your notice do not deserve to be celebrated. But when we have once transgressed the bounds of modesty, we cannot recede; our wisest course is to push on in the same confident career. I therefore do, without reserve, again and again entreat you to honour me with a degree of



praise exceeding the bounds of your real opinion, though, in so doing, you may transgress the strict rules of history. And if the partiality of friendship, by which in one of your prefaces you declare yourself in terms most elegant, to be no more moved than was Hercules by pleasure in the story of him given us by Xenophon, should yet incline you to do me something more than justice, do not resist the bias, and give to our friendship something more than the strictness of truth would allow. If my earnest solicitation shall prevail with you to undertake what I am recommending to you, I am persuaded you will find in it a subject worthy of your powers and abilities. From the beginning of the conspiracy to my return from banishment, there seems to me to be enough to fill a moderate volume; in which you will have an opportunity of bringing into use your deep acquaintance with the science of political changes, by explaining the causes of revolutions, or suggesting the remedies for public evils; bestowing your censure or commendation as occasions may seem to call for the one or the other; and, where you think there is ground for the exhibition of your accustomed plainness of speech, exposing the perfidy, the plots, and the treachery by which so many have endeavoured to compass my destruction.

The casualties by which my course has been distinguished, will furnish a variety of matter for your pen, abounding in that sort of pleasure, which takes so strong a hold upon the mind in the perusal. For nothing tends more to the delight of a reader than the fortunes and vicissitudes of states, which though painful enough in the experience, affect us with a pleasing interest when we trace them through the pages of history. The secure remembrance of afflictions past and gone has its peculiar gratification. And it must be owned, there is something pleasing in the indulgence of our pity for others in a state of suffering from which we are exempt. Who can contemplate the dying Epaminondas on the plains of Mantinea, without mingled emotions of commiseration and delight; who refused to let the javelin be withdrawn from the wound, till he was told, in answer to his enquiry, that his shield had been saved from the hands of the enemy; that

thus assured, he might tranquilly and with honour resign his breath, amidst the anguish of his wound. What can hold the mind of a reader in more eager suspense, than the flight and return of Themistocles? While a mere narrative of general events affords little more entertainment than the details of our public registers. But the changeable and ambiguous fortunes of an excellent person, agitate the mind with all the various feelings of admiration, expectation, joy, sorrow, hope, fear,—and if the whole is wound up by a splendid catastrophe, we feel the greatest delight in the perusal. For which reason I should be the more pleased, could you be induced to determine to separate from the body of your historical work, the particular account of the things and events in which I have borne the most conspicuous part; which will embrace a great variety of events, counsels, and transactions. Nor do I fear the imputation of endeavouring to win your favour by flattery, when I acknowledge to you my ambition to be celebrated by your pen. You are not a man to be ignorant of your own worth; or to set them down for envious persons who do not admire you, or for flatterers, those who are loud in your commendation. Nor, indeed, am I so senseless as to desire to be transmitted to posterity by one, who in praising me does not advance the fame and glory of his own genius. Alexander, in desiring to be painted by Apelles, and sculptured by Lysippus, was not moved by the desire of gaining their favour, but judged that the display of their art on such a subject would be as much for their glory as his own. Those artificers formed resemblances of the body, to make the originals known to such as were unacquainted with them; and, if these resemblances had never existed, those illustrious men would not have been the less illustrious. Nor was the Spartan Agesilaus, less known to fame, by not allowing his likeness to be exhibited in painting, or sculpture, than those who have been ambitious of these honours. The one little book of Xenophon, containing the eulogy of that king, has gone far beyond what all the pictures and statues in the world could have done for his fame. It would conduce to my gratification, and the honour of my name, to have you, rather

than others, for my recorder, as not only thus should I have the advantage of your genius to set off my actions, as Timoleon had that of Timæus, and Themistocles of Herodotus, but I should also have the testimony of a most illustrious and far-renowned individual; well known and well approved in the gravest causes of the republic: and thus will seem to be imparted to me, not only the celebrity which Alexander when he came to Sigæum, said had been bestowed on Achilles by Homer, but also the weighty testimony of a great and illustrious man. What the poet Nævius<sup>6</sup> puts into the mouth of Hector pleases me much, who not only rejoices in receiving praise, but in receiving it from one deserving himself of praise.

But should I fail in obtaining this request, that is, if any impediment should stand in your way, (for it would be doing you injustice, to suppose it possible for me not to obtain my request, when I ask of you what you are not prevented from performing,) I may perhaps, find myself compelled to do, what some condemn, though warranted by the example of many illustrious men;—I will write my own history. But to this method there are, as must be well known to you, the following objections. In writing of one's self, if an action is to be praised, one is constrained to speak more modestly of what deserves to be commended; and to pass by what may merit reprehension. Add to which, the testimony in such a case has less strength, and the authority less weight. In fine, many will be apt to censure the practice, and say, that the heralds of the public games carry themselves more modestly, who when they have crowned the other victors, and have called out their names with a loud voice, if they are also to be crowned as victors before the games are over, to avoid being their own heralds, consign that office to another. These consequences I would fain avoid, and if you can be persuaded to take my cause into your hands, I shall avoid them. For the reasons, therefore, above assigned I do request you will so do.

<sup>6</sup> A celebrated dramatic poet, who died about 203 years B. C. Some fragments of whose works remain.

And that you may not be surprised, that after the frequent notice you have given me of your intention to write an accurate history of the public counsels and events which have taken place in my time, and under my administration, I should yet be urging upon you this request with so much earnestness and so many words, I have only to repeat my eager desire, on which I have before insisted, (being as you know of a sanguine disposition,) not only that others, while I yet live, should be brought to an acquaintance with me through your writings, but that I myself may have the enjoyment of the full share of glory to which I may be entitled.

If it be not too much trouble, you will have the goodness to say by letter, what is your determination as to these matters. If you undertake my cause, I will prepare for you some notes and observations respecting all the matters of which you will have to treat. But if you postpone the consideration to a future time, I will talk with you on the subject personally. In the meantime, I am sure you will not leave it wholly unattended to, but will polish what you have begun; and continue your friendship towards me.

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In those turbulent times of the republic, and amidst all the stimulants furnished by a tumultuous state of civil disorders to the worst passions of depraved humanity, there existed, thinly dispersed, some examples of quiet and contemplative life. Occasionally, though rarely, there was found a Roman citizen, who stood out of the vortex of public agitations, glad to take refuge from the distractions of the world in the bowers of philosophic or academic leisure. The most private and confidential, and therefore the most agreeable of Cicero's letters are those which he addresses to persons of this description, among which, distinguished by its superior correctness of judgment and feeling, is the letter to Marcus Marius, a man of cultivated mind living in rural retirement, and known to posterity only through the medium of this correspondence; in which letter the just and humane reflec-

tions on those unhallowed customs, in which the Roman people of all classes found their chief amusement, exhibit Cicero's natural disposition in a very advantageous light.

## CICERO TO MARCUS MARIUS.

IF the suffering and infirm state of your health has prevented you from coming to our late public games and entertainments, I must ascribe your absence rather to your ill fortune than to your wisdom. But if you were kept away, not by the state of your health, but by your contempt of those things which others regard with so much admiration, I feel a double pleasure in the consideration of your present exemption from bodily pain, and that soundness of mind which has raised you above those empty amusements to which others are so unreasonably addicted. In making this observation, however, I assume that you are enjoying the proper fruits of your leisure, as you used to enjoy them in that delightful retreat in which you were left almost wholly to yourself. Nor do I doubt that you have been passing your mornings in contemplating with delight the scenery about Stabiae and Sejanum, to which you have opened views from your chamber, while those who have thus left you to your own elegant enjoyments, have with their senses hardly awake been nodding over their vulgar farcical exhibitions. Thus, no doubt, your mornings have been passed: the other portions of the day you have doubtless consumed in those recreations which you have created and planned for yourself in conformity with your own cultivated taste. We have been obliged to endure those spectacles which have had the sanction forsooth of Sp. Mæcius.

If you desire to be informed, I must tell you, the games were got up with great cost and shew; but they were not such as you would have relished, if I may judge of your taste by my own. For some of the actors had upon this occasion presented themselves again upon the stage for the sake of bringing honour to them, whose honour, I thought, would have been better consulted by their withdrawing from the scene.



Truly our friend *Æsopus*, with whom you have been so pleased, made such an exhibition of himself as convinced all men that he should desist from all further effort; for when he began the famous oath, "*Si sciens fallo*," his voice failed him. But why need I proceed to other things; you well know the nature of the rest of the games. They had hardly as much humour and festivity as the most ordinary shews. The pomp and parade which accompanied this celebration took from them their sportive and festive character; which pomp and parade, I doubt not, you would most willingly have dispensed with. What amusement could the six hundred mules, exhibited in the tragedy of *Clytemnestra*, have afforded to any sensible person? or whole regiments enclosed in the Trojan horse, with their shields of the elephant's hide; or troops of horse and foot, in their strange and various armour, ready for battle: which things were sure enough to attract popular admiration, but would have afforded you no entertainment. Truly, in attending to the recitations of your *Protophones*, while entertaining you with any orations, save my own, you would have passed your time as agreeably as any of us in witnessing these shews. I cannot think you would have had any longing for our Greek or *Oscian* games;<sup>1</sup> especially as you can have *Oscian* buffooneries enough in your own rural senate. And I know you have so strong a dislike of every thing Greek, that you will not travel the Grecian road to your own villa. As to the *athletæ*, you cannot regret not seeing them, as you despise even gladiatorial combats: and, indeed, in these athletic exhibitions *Pompey* himself has owned that he wasted his oil and his pains upon them. The rest of the entertainment consisted of the combats of wild beasts, which were exhibited every morning and evening during five days successively: magnificent they may be, but what gratification can it be to any man of a polished and cultivated mind to see

<sup>1</sup> *Pompey* gave each of these histrionic entertainments in their own several languages. *Oscos* was a region of *Campania*, in which farces of a coarse and ludicrous kind were exhibited for the entertainment of the common people. *Tacit. Ann. L. iv. 14. Liv. vii. 2. Sueton. lib. 45. Cal. 27. Galb. 13.*

one of our weaker species torn and mangled by a brute superior in strength, or to see a noble beast transpierced by the hunter. Which spectacles, if they are worth seeing at all, have been often seen by you; and we who saw them had nothing new presented to us.

The elephants were the sport of the last day; it was a spectacle looked at with wonder by the vulgar crowd. But enjoyment there was none. It was even accompanied by a sentiment of commiseration, springing from a notion that there is a sort of fellowship between the elephant and the human species. But that I may not seem to you to have been quite happy and at my ease during these scenic amusements, I must tell you, that all this while I have been wearing myself out with my exertions at the trial of your friend, Gallus Caninius.

If the people would as easily consent to discharge me from my public duties as *Æsopus*, I solemnly declare I would desist from further exertions, and spend the remainder of my days with you, or such as you, in philosophical and literary retirement. I was weary of public business in the days of youth and ambition, and when I was at liberty, without offence, to decline defending any one whose cause I did not wish to advocate; it is now become a sacrifice of life and liberty. Nor do I expect, as matters now go, to reap any fruit from my labours in this way. And I am often under the painful necessity of defending those who deserve no such favour at my hands, by the urgent request of those to whom I am under obligation. I am, therefore, seeking all manner of pretexts for living in the way agreeable to my taste. Yourself, and the manner in which you bestow your leisure, are the theme of my commendation and applause, and I bear with the greater composure the unfrequency of your visits, as knowing that were you now at Rome, I should not be able to enjoy your conversation, seasoned as it is with wit and pleasantry, nor you mine (if I possess any power of pleasing) amidst the harassing occupations with which I am at this time engrossed; from which if I can ever be in some measure, for I do not desire to be wholly, released, I shall, I trust, shew you what it is to live a life of elegant enjoyment. But do you, in the

meantime, do all you can to support your tottering health, that you may be able to ride with me about my villas in my winter.

I have written to you a longer letter than I am accustomed to write, not as an offering of my leisure, but of my friendship, and because, as you will remember, you expressed a wish in a letter you wrote some time ago, that I would give you such an account of things as I have now sent you, that you might have the less to regret in having missed these famous games. If I have done this in the manner you wish I shall rejoice; if not, you will in future come yourself to these games, and I shall have the pleasure of seeing you here, and so you will no longer have to look only to my letters for your entertainment.

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The letters of Cicero to Curio reflect great honour upon him. Curio was a young man of high patrician descent, and greatly distinguished by his abilities, but beyond all bounds addicted to the vicious extravagances of this corrupt period of the republic. Having totally ruined himself by his wasteful and riotous expences, he was easily bought over, by the payment of his enormous debts, to the service of Cæsar, and became one of his most devoted partizans. His talents were such, that, in the opinion of competent judges, had he espoused the cause of liberty, he might at least have delayed, if not prevented its overthrow.

*Haud alium tanta civem tulit indole Roma,  
Aut cui plus leges deberent, recta sequenti.*

*Lucan. Phars. l. iv. 814.*

He behaved with great bravery in support of Cæsar's cause in Africa, where Varus commanded on the part of the republic; and was slain in action against the troops of Juba, near Utica. He seems to have been employed as quæstor to Camus Clodius, in Asia, at the time the letters of Cicero were addressed to him. Cicero appears to have entertained a lofty idea of the great qualifications of this promising young noble-

man; and after having brought about a reconciliation between him and his father, whom he had much incensed by his conduct, to have laboured, with a kind and sincere interest in his welfare, to reclaim him from his thoughtless extravagance, and fix him in an honourable course.

## CICERO TO CURIO.

I AM deprived of a venerable witness of my affection for you by the death of your father, that illustrious man, who would have been no less distinguished by his own merits than by his felicity in having you for his son, had he but seen you again before he departed out of this life. But I trust our friendship will stand in need of no proof from testimony. May your patrimony be made a blessing to you. You will certainly have me with you, to whom you are as dear and pleasant as you were to your father.

## TO THE SAME.

It was not owing to any want of attention to your wishes that Rupa did not execute your commission; but neither myself nor the rest of your friends thought it advisable to adopt any measures in your absence which would prevent you from taking up the matter untouched and entire upon your return hither. What I think upon this subject I will explain to you more fully at a future time, by letter; or, that you may not come with your mind made up to resist my arguments, I will encounter your reasons face to face; that, if I shall not succeed in turning you over to my opinion, I shall at least leave my opinion recorded in your memory: so that if at any time you should, which, however, I hope you will not, have occasion to repent of your determination, my persuasion to the contrary may be remembered by you. But thus much I will now say, that such is the crisis which will meet you on your return, that, with the qualifications which have been furnished to you by nature, study, and fortune, you will more easily attain to the highest dignities of the state than by the

largest sums lavished on spectacles. The power of giving these entertainments, which belongs rather to wealth than to virtue, attracts no admiration; nor is there any one who does not begin to be wearied and satiated by their frequency. But I am doing the very thing I said I would avoid, by entering into the explanation of the grounds of my opinion. I will defer altogether, therefore, the consideration of this subject to the time of your arrival. In the meantime it is fit you should know that the highest expectations are formed concerning you, and that those things are looked for from you which are to be expected from the loftiest virtue and most consummate ability. For which things if you are prepared, as you ought to be, and I trust you are, you will make the most valuable presents to us your friends, to all your countrymen, and to the republic itself. Be assured of this, that there is not any one dearer to me than yourself, or in whose society I feel greater enjoyment.

## TO THE SAME.

EPISTLES are, as you know, of various kinds. But the most obvious and direct purpose of letter-writing and that which gave birth to it, was to inform our absent friends of those matters which it might be for our or their interest that they should be made acquainted with. You must not, however, expect any letter of this kind from me; for you have correspondents and messengers to inform you of all your family affairs, and there is nothing new to tell you concerning myself. There are two other species of letters which please me mightily—the familiar and jocose, and those which turn upon grave and moral topics. But which of these it would be least proper for me to use upon the present occasion it is difficult to say. Shall I use playfulness with you in my letters? No, truly; for I should hardly think the man that could be mirthful in these times deserving of the title of citizen. Shall I write in a more serious strain? But what can Cicero write in a serious strain to Curio, unless it be on the present state of the republic? and on this subject my situation is such that



I dare not commit my real sentiments to paper, and none other can I write. Since, then, no subject is left to me on which I can employ my pen, I must confine myself within the bounds of the topic on which I lay such frequent stress in our communications, and exhort you to pursue with arduous the path that leads to the summit of glory. A strong adversary awaits you in the extraordinary expectation your talents have excited, and that adversary can only be conquered in one way; which one way is this, by diligently cultivating those arts whereby the glory on which your mind is so bent is attainable. I might add much more to the same purpose, if I did not consider that there was enough in your own mind to direct your willing efforts to the same objects: and what I have now suggested has arisen not so much from a desire to inflame your zeal as to testify my affection.

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There is nothing in which the wretched inferiority of heathen ethics to the sublime morality of the gospel is more striking than in the topics resorted to for administering consolation to the afflicted. Neither Cicero nor Sulpicius have any better mitigation of sorrow to propose to the sufferer than what is borrowed from despair, or from the general allotment of humanity. Under bereavements of the most heart-rending kind, the letter of heathen consolation rarely finds a solace more ready at hand than the escape which death affords from impending ills, or the critical disorders of the time. The divine attributes of love and mercy, the hope of forgiveness, the rewards of patience, the fruits of penitence, and the comfort of prayer, though comprising but a small part of the resources of the christian in trouble, are supports far above the reach of the heathen when "evils compass him about," and "his heart is disquieted within him." One blank and negative ground of consolation to those who were deprived by death of their kindred, unknown to christianity, was furnished by the pestilent dogma maintained by many of the ancient moralists, which denied a future state of positive retribution

—a doctrine maintained as well by those who held the temporary as by those who believed in the eternal existence of the soul after the dissolution of the body. Both Cicero<sup>a</sup> and Seneca, though of different sects, agreed in their inclination to treat the notion of positive punishment after death as a poetical delusion: and Socrates himself carried the idea of punishment no further than to the exclusion from the habitations of the gods. In the letter of Cicero to his friend Titius, who had lost his son, we find this opinion; which removes from the moral government of mankind its most effectual sanction and security: furnishing one of the main arguments for reconciling his friend to his late bereavement.

## CICERO TO TITIUS.

ALTHOUGH among all your friends I am perhaps the least fit to offer consolation to you, being so large a sharer in your grief as to need consolation myself, yet as my sorrow falls a little below yours in degree, I have thought it inconsistent with the friendship that exists between us, and the interest I take in all that concerns you, to remain silent while I see you in such great affliction; and not to administer some little consolation to you, which may somewhat alleviate, though it may not cure your sorrow.

There is no ground of consolation, which deserves to be more frequently in our thoughts, though none is more common, than that we ought to remember we are men, and as such born under a law which subjects our lives to all the various assaults of fortune; and we cannot refuse to live under the condition which we are made subject to by our birth: nor ought we to repine at those events which it is out of our power by any counsel to avoid. By reflecting upon the misfortunes which have befallen others, we may perceive that there is nothing singular in our own exposure to them. But neither these nor any other arguments which are used by the

<sup>a</sup> See *Tuscul. Disp.* l. 21. 30. *Senec. Consol. ad Marc.* 19.

wisest men to administer consolation, seem so calculated to effectuate their object as the consideration of the present unhappy situation of our affairs, and the sad series of events which cloud the prospects of the republic. Such, indeed, is the state of things, that those are to be accounted the most fortunate who have never been parents ; and as to those who have lost their children, surely they must be considered as having much less to regret than those who have suffered such bereavement in a flourishing period of the republic, or in any period in which a republic can be said to exist. If the sense of your own personal loss is the main cause of your grief, it may be difficult perhaps to remove such a general motive to sorrow. But if your grief springs from your loving concern for those whose fate you deplore ; not to insist upon that of which I have very frequently read and heard, that there is no real calamity in death in which consciousness remains, it being rather an entrance into immortality, than the extinction of life ; let us remember on the other hand that if no consciousness remains, there can be no misery where there is no sensibility.

If you can by any means be persuaded to think that no real evil has happened to them whom you loved, your motive to sorrow will be greatly diminished. There will then remain only the regret which you feel on your own account ; and it would ill agree with the wisdom and gravity of character which you have from your earliest age exhibited, to support with impatience misfortunes which affect yourself personally, while they extend not to those whom you have tenderly loved : for you have always upon all occasions, both public and private, conducted yourself with so much fortitude, that you stand engaged to maintain a firm and constant equability. That which time, which wears out the keenest sorrow, is sure to bring, it is the part of a wise and prudent man to anticipate. For if there never was a woman, soft and tender as is that sex, to whose maternal anguish for her lost children the lapse of time did not put a period, surely it becomes us to do for ourselves what time would do for us, and not to wait for time to bring us the medicine which reason is capable of affording us.

If I have been able in any way by this letter to impart relief to your mind, I shall in some measure have accomplished my wish. If my endeavours shall not have so far succeeded, I shall at least have discharged the duty of a most attached and affectionate friend, which I wish you to be assured of my having always been, and of my determination so to continue.

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In the commerce of friendship an interchange of sentiments of the most agreeable and graceful character is presented in the two following letters between Cicero and L. Luceius, a man greatly distinguished by his urbanity and prudence in those days of political and moral disorder. It is highly creditable to the character of Cicero, that it was a centre of attraction to all that the times afforded of moral excellence.

L. LUCCEIUS TO CICERO.

I SHALL rejoice to hear that you are well. As to my own health, it is much as usual, or rather, I think, somewhat worse. I have frequently called at your house in hopes of seeing you; and am surprised to find that you have not been at Rome since Cæsar left it. I do not well perceive what is your principal reason for withdrawing from hence. If any of your usual engagements of the literary kind make you thus enamoured of solitude, I am so far from blaming your resolution, that I think of it with great pleasure. There is no sort of life which can be more agreeable, not only in these mournful times, but in those in which we enjoy all the tranquillity we wish for: especially to a mind like yours, which now naturally seeks repose from great and wearisome occupations, and which is always capable of producing something that will afford pleasure to others, and honour to yourself. But if you have withdrawn yourself from the world, that you may give free vent to sadness and tears, as when you were here, I shall grieve because you grieve; but, if you will allow me freely to impart my mind, I cannot excuse you. For let me ask how

does it happen, that you who can penetrate subjects the most abstruse, should in this instance be the only person unable to discern what is so obvious. Can you possibly be ignorant how unavailing are your unceasing complaints; and how they serve only to double those inquietudes which your good sense calls upon you to subdue? But if I cannot persuade you by arguments, I may, perhaps, by entreaties, and by earnestly requesting you, by the interest you take in obliging me, to shake off this gloom which hangs over you, and return to that society and to those occupations which were either common to us both, or peculiar to yourself. But though I would fain dissuade you from persisting in the course you seem to have marked out for yourself, I would by no means be troublesome. Since I move between two contraries;—on the one hand the hope that you will comply with my request, on the other that, if you cannot comply, you will not take amiss my interference."

## CICERO TO L. LUCCEIUS.

YOUR affection for me breathes out in every part of the letter which I have just received from you. Which feeling towards me, though not new to me, was nevertheless not the less agreeable and welcome: I should say it gave me pleasure, if that were not a word of which I have taken my leave for ever. Not merely, however, for the cause you suspect, and for which, in the gentlest and most affectionate terms, you do in fact severely reprove me, but because all that could supply a remedy for my wounded spirits is no more in being. What then is my resource? Shall I seek refuge among my friends? How many remain? We once possessed our friends in common, of whom some have perished, and others have become, how I know not, insensible to the evils which surround us. Your society, indeed, I might enjoy; and to enjoy it would be the principal wish of my heart. Long intercourse, affection, habit, similarity of studies, in short, what link is wanting to unite us in the closest intimacy? If, then, this is so, I do



not understand what it is that keeps us asunder. How it has happened I know not, but certain it is that we saw little of each other when we were neighbours at Tusculum and Puteolæ. I say nothing of our residence in Rome, in which, as the forum was the common resort, neighbourhood is not required to bring people together.

I know not by what ill fate it has happened that I am thrown on these evil times, so that, when I might have expected to flourish in the greatest credit and dignity, I should, on the contrary, be ashamed to be in existence. Despoiled of every honour and every comfort that advanced my public or solaced my private life, what is it that can afford me any refuge? Books are, to be sure, a resource, and to this, indeed, I do assiduously apply. Yet even these seem to exclude me from the peaceful harbour of rest I would fain arrive at, and their contents appear to reproach me for remaining in a life which is nothing but the prolongation of a period of trouble and affliction.

Can you be surprized, then, that I absent myself from Rome, when there is nothing under my own roof to afford me any satisfaction, and public affairs, public men, the forum, and the senate are all equally distasteful. I resort, therefore, to letters, in which, indeed, I consume my whole time, not as seeking from them a permanent cure of my misfortunes, but that I may obtain from them a respite from the sad remembrance of them. But if you and I had acted as we should have done, had not our constant inquietudes put it out of our minds, we should have passed all our time together; nor would your infirm health, or my grief, have stood in our way. Let us, then, bring about this happy state as far as it may be possible; for what can be more suitable to both of us than the company of each other? I shall, therefore, be with you in a few days.

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The letters of Cicero to Servius Sulpicius, Lucius Luceius, and others of his graver friends, have an uniform character of

despondency imparted to them by the perilous course of public events; but to Papirius Pœtus, an epicurean of illustrious descent, and distinguished by his wit and humour, Cicero's letters are in a style of familiar gaiety and freedom, which shew what he means by the *urbanitatis lepos*, on which, in his lectures on the arts of oratory and composition, he appears to have set so high a value.

## CICERO TO PAPIRIUS PÆTUS.

I RECEIVED a double gratification from your letter; it made me laugh, and shewed me that you are again capable of laughing yourself. Nor do I take it amiss that you should thus retort upon me the raillery of which I have so often made you the subject. I am very sorry not to have been able to travel your way, as I had intended, for my purpose was not merely to have come as your guest, but to have taken up my regular quarters with you. But what an altered man you would have found me! not the man whose stomach you were accustomed to quiet with your cloying delicacies<sup>9</sup> before our regular meals, but one who will set himself to work in good earnest, with an unbroken appetite, and go right through with his task, from the egg to the roast veal.<sup>10</sup> Those my old habits of temperance, which you were wont to praise so much, and which made you extol me as a person so easy to entertain, are all laid aside: for I have done with all cares about the republic, and all ambition to make a figure in the senate, and have gone over fairly to the camp of my old adversaries the epicureans. Not that I am yet become a convert to that profusion and excess to which our

<sup>9</sup> These delicacies were set before the guests preparatory to the principal entertainment, and were given as provocatives to appetite. But it would appear from Cicero's raillery that they were sometimes of a nature to damp rather than excite the stomach.

<sup>10</sup> The first dish at the table of the Romans seems usually to have been eggs. See Hor. Sat. ii. 2: and their feasts were generally concluded with roast or broiled meat.

entertainments are now carried, but to that tasteful luxury which you used to exhibit when you could better afford it, though you never owned more farms than you do at present. You must be prepared to receive one who brings a good appetite with him, and some understanding of what good fare is. Men who become late proficient in any art, are, you know, apt to presume upon their knowledge. I will have none of your cakes and confectionary, they must be quite discarded. I am become such a proficient in this art, that I venture to invite to my table Verrius and Camillus, those delicate and refined friends of yours. I have even given a supper to Hirtius, though without a peacock; for, to speak the truth, my cook had not skill enough to imitate any part of his luxurious entertainments except his soup. But to give you a sketch of my present mode of life. I begin the morning with receiving the compliments of many good but dispirited men, as well as those who rejoice in their victory, and which latter treat me with every mark of attention and regard. When these ceremonies are over, I shut myself up with my books and my pen. Even here I am sometimes followed by an audience, who set me down for a learned man for no other reason than because I am a little less ignorant than they; after this the ease and recreation of my body completes the day. I have given to my country all she can claim of me. I have mourned for her more bitterly and more durably than a mother for her only son.

If you love me, take care of your health, lest I take advantage of your illness, and come and devour your larder; for I have resolved not to be moved by your state, sick as you may be, to shew you any mercy.

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Of the recommendatory kind, perhaps, a better example is hardly to be found than that of Cicero to his elegant friend Sulpicius, in behalf of Manius Curius, who was then exercising in Greece the peaceable occupation of a merchant, after having been one of the city quæstors in the year 691,

and having a few years afterwards filled the office of tribune. His ambition carried him no further in this tumultuous and dangerous career; and in the predicament in which public affairs then stood, he judged it more prudent and profitable to withdraw from all personal connexion with them. He appears to have been a man of cultivated taste and studious habits, assuming the profession of a merchant more for the opportunities it afforded him of improving his acquaintance with men and things than for objects of gain or accumulation.

## CICERO TO S. SULPICIUS.

MANIUS Curius, who is now a merchant at Patrae, is a person, for many reasons, much esteemed by me; our friendship is of very long standing; it began, indeed, with his first appearance in the forum. On many occasions, formerly, and now again, especially during this most unhappy civil war, his house, with all its hospitalities, has been open to me; which, if I had wanted it, I might have used as my own. But the greatest tie that binds me to him, which is almost of a sacred kind, is his close intimacy with my friend Atticus, whom he values and loves above all others. Possibly you may be already acquainted with Curius, and, if so, my recommendation must, I think, come rather too late, for he must have recommended *himself* to you by his polite attentions and elegant manners. If such be the case, then I earnestly request that the sentiments you already entertain towards him may be confirmed and increased by the recommendation of this letter. But if his diffidence have kept him from your acquaintance, or his merits have not yet become sufficiently known to you, or for any other reason a farther introduction may be required, I beg to add that there is no one whom I could venture to commend to your regard with greater zeal and confidence. I will also pledge myself, as every one who sincerely and disinterestedly recommends another ought to do, that you will upon farther acquaintance find in Curius that good breeding, probity, and cultivation of mind which will prove him to be worthy of your friendship, and strictly entitled to all I say of

To me, certainly, it will be a very sensible gratification if my letter shall have that influence with you which, in writing it, I confidently expected.

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The letter of Cicero to Curius upon his retirement to Patræ is, in a high degree, pleasing and interesting, and gives reason to think that the most agreeable properties of this great man's mind would have shone forth more abundantly in his epistolary correspondence, had he been less a sharer in the troubles of his country and the struggles of contending ambition.

## TO M. CURIUS.

I REMEMBER when you seemed to me to have done very unwisely in choosing to live with foreigners, rather than with your fellow-citizens. I naturally thought that a residence in Rome, while it was Rome, suited better your parts and breeding than, I will not say Patræ, but than any city that can be named of the whole Peloponessus. But now, on the contrary, I consider your retirement into Greece, in this desperate crisis of our affairs, as a proof of your sound judgment and forecast, and that you have consulted your happiness in thus absenting yourself; if it is possible for any one in these times to be happy who possesses any sensibility. But what you have obtained by removing to another scene, which you had the power of doing, I contrive to accomplish by another method. As soon as I have received the complimentary visits of my friends, which are now more frequent than they were wont to be, for they come to look upon a man who feels as a patriot as they would come to see a very uncommon sight, I shut myself up in my library, and there I occupy myself in the composition of those performances which are such as you find them; and I conclude them to be favourably thought of by you, for I heard you once, at your own house, when you were reproaching me for my dejection and despondency, remark, that the fortitude which my writings recommended was not found in my practice. But, in truth, I mourned



over the lost republic, which had been endeared to me not only by the honours it had bestowed upon me, but by the benefits which it had derived from my services : and now, when not only reason, which ought to have the greatest influence, but time, which usually heals the weakest minds under affliction, have each brought their balm to my wounded spirit, I cannot but continue to lament to see this great community falling to pieces without any prospect of better times. Nor, indeed, does the fault rest with him who has all in his power (unless, indeed, that the power itself is what it ought not to be); but our misfortunes and our follies have had so large a share in all that has happened, that we have hardly a right to complain. Be this as it may, I see no hope of any improvement; wherefore I will conclude as I began, with commending your retirement from such a scene as a proof of your wisdom, if it was the result of consideration; of your good fortune, if it was owing to chance.

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A letter from Cicero to Postus shews the importance attached by Cicero to the cultivation of letter-writing as a branch of polite literature.

CICERO TO PAPIRIUS PÆTUS.

WHAT is it you say? Do you call it madness to attempt to imitate the thunder, as you term it, of my eloquence? You might, indeed, have properly so said if you had failed in the attempt. But since you have excelled your model, mine is the disgrace, not yours. What you quote, therefore, from one of Trabea's comedies, as applying to yourself, is by no means so; the failure is really mine, who fall so far short of my own aims.

But tell me what sort of figure do I make as a letter-writer. Do I not correspond in a style quite popular and familiar? Not, indeed, always in the same style, for epistolary composition is of a character very unlike that of the

bar or the senate; though in judicial matters we are not accustomed to vary our modes of expression. In those, for example, in which private interests and those of little moment are concerned, we consult accuracy rather than elegance; where, indeed, the reputation or life of a client is in question, we use a nobler and more polished manner. But I always accustom myself to write my letters in the language of conversation.

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Among the shining men of this period few acquired greater distinction by their literary attainments than Trebonius, or seemed to possess a higher epistolary talent. He had the reputation of being a man of great integrity and humanity; deriving his descent from a plebeian stock, but full of the earnest characteristics of the old Roman patriotism. To the enthusiasm with which he entertained these sentiments is to be ascribed his participation in the conspiracy against the life of his friend and patron, Julius Cæsar: and as the crime of this cruel assassination was aggravated in Trebonius by the stain of ingratitude, he was the first on whom the act was visited by the destruction of the perpetrator. After Cæsar's death, Trebonius made haste to repair to the province of Asia which had been assigned to him before that event, and fixed his residence at Smyrna. Here he was surprized and captured by Dolabella, who, after keeping him two days under torture, to extort from him the discovery of all the money in his possession, caused his head to be cut off and carried about on a spear.

The letter of Trebonius to Cicero, in commendation of his son, was one of three received by the father about the same time, of which it is hard to say which was conceived in terms of the greatest elegance. The letter from Trebonius is dated from Athens; and it is here inserted to introduce the son of Cicero to the reader's notice.

## LETTER TO CRATIPPUS

I HAVE written to the Duke of Mass, where, to my great contentment, I saw your son diverted to subjects most worthy of his person, and in the highest degree the property of his countenance. Of the delight which this circumstance affords me, you know me too well to need any assurance from me: for you will know how dear you are to me, and how by the long and sincere friendship which has existed between us, I am made to regard in the smallest advantage which attends you, much more in a matter so important to your happiness. Do not imagine, my dear Cratippus, that these are mere words, and only to please you. The truth is, there is nobody more beloved among all the youths now at Andras than this young man, whom, because he is yours, I call also mine, for I can separate myself from nothing that concerns or affects you; nor is any one here more studious of all those arts which you most delight in, that is, of the best. I congratulate you, therefore, very heartily, and with great sincerity, and myself no less, that he whom we must needs have loved from a sort of necessity, proves to be just such a one as we should love from choice.

As he threw out in conversation that he wished to visit Asia, I invited and entreated him to come there while I presided over that province. And you cannot doubt of my filling your office in every paternal tenderness towards him. It shall be my care that Cratippus<sup>11</sup> shall be constantly with him, so that you need not be afraid of his neglecting those studies to which, I know, he is continually animated by your exhortations; nor shall he want any encouragements from me to push forwards his steps daily in those attainments of learning into which he has entered with so resolute a beginning.

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Brutus and Lentulus, in letters to the elder Cicero, bear the same testimony to the good conduct and high qualities of

<sup>11</sup> One of the most celebrated philosophers of the Peripatetic sect.

son. It appears, too, that the son's own letters were, in the opinion of his father, written in terms the most affectionate and dutiful, and expressed with great grace and propriety. There are only two letters of this young man extant, but these were written to Tiro, the freedman and faithful friend of his father, and, as may be supposed, without effort or dissimulation, are fair specimens of his habits of thinking and feeling.

CICERO THE SON TO TIRO.<sup>12</sup>

WHILE I was in daily and earnest expectation of your messengers from Rome, they came at last on the forty-sixth day they left you. Their arrival was most welcome to me for my father's most indulgent and affectionate letter gave me abundant joy; which was greatly added to by the receipt also of yours; so that, instead of regretting my omission to write to you, I was rather pleased that my silence had allowed me to receive so particular a proof of your kindness. It gave me great pleasure to find you so ready to accept my apology. I do not doubt, my dearest Tiro, that reports which reach you concerning me, are such as give you great satisfaction. It shall be my care and endeavour that your growing good opinion of me shall come every day more and more confirmed to you. And since you promise to be the echo of my praises, you may, I trust, venture to be so with confidence; for the past errors of my youth have mortified me so deeply, that my mind does not only abhor the errors I have committed, but my ears cannot endure the mention of them.

I am perfectly assured that you have shared in these feelings of regret and sorrow for the past; and it is no wonder you should; for though you wish me all success for my sake, you are also interested in it for your own, for it has always been my wish that you should be a partner in all the good that may befall me. As I have, therefore, been formerly the object of grief to you, so it shall be my object in future to be the cause of your joy on my account.

<sup>12</sup> Tironi Suo dulcissimo S. P. D.

You must know that I live in the greatest intimacy with Cratippus,—rather as his son than his pupil. I not only hear his lectures with pleasure, but am charmed with his conversation. I pass whole days with him, and frequently also a part of the night; for I prevail with him as often as I can to sup with me; and in our familiar chat, as we sit at table, the night steals upon us without our thinking of it, while he lays aside the severity of his philosophy, and jokes amongst us with all the good humour imaginable. Contrive, therefore, to come to us as soon as possible, and see this agreeable and excellent man. Why need I tell you of Bruttius, whom I never part with out of my sight? His life is regular and exemplary, and his company the most entertaining. He has the habit of introducing questions of literature into conversation, and of seasoning philosophy with pleasantry. I have hired a lodging for him in the next house to me, and support his slender means as far as I am able out of my narrow income. I have begun also to declaim in Greek under Cassius, but I like to exercise myself in Latin under Bruttius. I live also in great familiarity with, and in the constant company of those whom Cratippus brought with him from Mitylene: men of learning, and highly esteemed by him. Epicrates, also, the leading man at Athens, and Leonidas spend much of their time with me; and many others of the same rank. This is the manner of my life at present. As to what you write about Gorgias, he was serviceable to me in my daily oratorical exercises, but I sacrificed all these considerations to the duty of obeying my father, who wrote peremptorily that I should dismiss him immediately. I complied, therefore, without hesitation, lest by my reluctance I might raise in him some suspicion to my disadvantage. Besides, I was touched with the reflection that it would be very unbecoming in me to deliberate on my father's judgment. Your zeal and your advice are very acceptable to me. I admit your excuse of want of leisure, for I know how much your time is taken up. I am greatly delighted with your having purchased a farm; and I beg most heartily to wish you joy



of it. Do not wonder at my congratulations coming in this place, for it was in the same part of your letter to me that you informed me of your purchase. You have now a place where you may drop all the forms of the city, and are become a Roman of the old rustic stamp. I please myself with placing your figure before my eyes, and imagining I see you bartering for your country wares, or consulting with your bailiff, or carrying from your table in the corner of your vest the seeds of your fruits for your garden. But to be serious: I am as much concerned as you are that I happened to be out of the way, and could not assist you upon that occasion. But depend upon it, my dear Tiro, I will make you easy, if fortune does not disappoint me, especially as I know you have bought this farm for the common use of us both. I am obliged to you for your care in executing my orders, but beg of you that a librarian may be sent to me in all haste, and especially a Greek one; for I waste much of my time in transcribing the lectures and books that are of use to me. Above all things take care of your health, that we may live to carry on our literary enquiries and studies together (*συμφιλολογειν*). I recommend Antheus to you. Farewell.

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The letters of Cicero to his friend Atticus, though replete with intelligence, comment, and instruction, respecting all the great transactions of the Roman world during a most important and eventful period of its history, and an excellent key to the politics of a most critical juncture of human affairs, were yet less elegant and agreeable as specimens of a graceful correspondence by letter, than those which were given to the world under the title of Familiar Letters. The letters to Atticus were for the most part written under the influence of such inquietude of spirits, with such a timid and distrustful view of the events and characters by which the writer was surrounded, and with such an aching sense of mortified vanity and defeated aspirations, that his genius could not move with the freedom and alacrity which was required for

its due expansion—a disadvantage not a little increased by the intimations and allusions in which Cicero obscurely let out his meaning, in communicating with his friend on public events and characters; and by the want of Atticus's part in the correspondence.

But nothing could escape from the hand of Cicero without the impress of his genius: and among his epistles to Atticus there are some very interesting and striking. One or two may be proper to produce as examples. In the 10th Epistle, lib. ix. the drooping courage of Pompey under the dominant ascendancy of Cæsar's star, the want of a prepared and decided mind in Cicero under his embarrassments, his conscientious adherence to Pompey, his secret admiration of Cæsar, his doubts and mental conflicts under the new aspect of public affairs, and his generous sympathy with the fortunes of his agitated country, are displayed in lively colours.

## CICERO TO ATTICUS.

I HAD really nothing to write to you when I took up my pen for the purpose. But as my anxiety and depression of spirit not only deprive me of sleep, but will not allow me any respite from pain when I am awake, I have set myself down to write something I know not what; that I may seem to be chatting with you, in whom alone I find comfort; without proposing to myself any subject or argument. I seem to have been all along bereaved of my understanding; and this one consideration continually torments me, that I did not, as a soldier his standard, follow Pompey, tottering as he is, or rather rushing to his destruction. I saw the man on the 11th of January under the greatest consternation, when I plainly perceived what he was about to do. Since then I have seen nothing to approve in him. His conduct has exhibited only a succession of blunders. In the meantime he has held no intercourse with me by letter. Nothing but how to fly has been the subject of his thoughts. Do you wish me to explain my own conduct? To tell you the truth, then, as in

What belongs to courtship, indelicate, stupid, and malignant persons create in us an aversion, so the disgraceful aspect of his man's flight, and his neglect of what it became him to do, made me cease to love him. Not one thing worthy of myself did he do, to induce me to accompany him in his flight. But now again my love resumes its place, and I am unable to support his absence. Books do nothing towards amusing me—literary occupations nothing—philosophy nothing. Night and day my heart flutters like a bird; and to fly away over the sea that lies before me is all my desire. I do, I do indeed undergo the punishment due to my temerity. And yet where was my temerity? What I did, was it not done upon mature consideration?

Had flight been the only question, I would unhesitatingly have followed him. But I reflected with horror on it as the prelude of a most cruel war, of which no man could calculate the result. What menaces were thrown out against the municipal towns, and against some of our virtuous citizens by name—in fine, against all who staid behind? How often was this saying in his mouth, 'Sylla could do so; cannot I do so likewise?' These things took fast hold of my thoughts.

Wickedly indeed did Tarquin act in arming Porsenna against his country; impious was the conduct of Coriolanus in calling for assistance from the Volsci. It was praiseworthy in Themistocles to die rather than carry arms against his country; while Hippias, the son of Pisistratus, who fell at the battle of Marathon, in arms against his country, acted a villainous part. But Sylla, Marius, and Cinna, acted under great provocation, perhaps with some colour of justice; and yet what could be more cruel or fatal than were their victories?

I was very anxious to avoid the recurrence of a warfare of the same kind; and the more so because I saw that more cruel measures were contemplated, and already in preparation; and that I, whom some have called the preserver and parent of the city, might be employed in leading against it troops of Goths, Armenians, and Colchians;—that I should

be an instrument to bring famine upon my countrymen, and desolation upon Italy. I first thought within myself that Pompey was but mortal, and that his death might be occasioned by many accidents, while it was our duty to do all we could that our city and country should be immortal. And still a remnant of hope suggested to me that something in the shape of a convention might be brought about before Cæsar should so far proceed in treason, or Pompey in blood. The state of things is now totally changed, and so are my expectations. The sun, to borrow your expression in one of your letters, seems, as to myself, to have fallen out of the system of the world. As it is said that while there is life in the sick there is hope, so, as long as Pompey was in Italy I did not despair. These hopes, these only hopes, have deceived me; and, to speak the truth, my age, worn down by incessant labours, and driven to seek repose, turns with fond desire to the solace of domestic life. Now, as matters stand, the danger must be hazarded, and hazarded it shall be, that I may fly hence. Perhaps it should have been done before. But the things I wrote to you about, and chiefly your opinion, stood in my way. For as soon as I arrived here, I opened a parcel of your letters which I have under seal, and preserve with the greatest care. Now in that which you wrote to me on the 23d of January, you thus express yourself:—"Let us see how Pompey will proceed, and what are his views. Should he leave Italy, he will act wrongly, and in my opinion absurdly (*αλογιστως*). If he should take this course, our plans must be changed." It is thus you write on the fourth day after my leaving the city. Afterwards, on the 25th of January, you write to me thus:—"Provided our friend Pompey does not leave Italy as he has absurdly (*αλογιστως*) abandoned Rome." In another letter of the same date, you give a positive answer to my application for your advice. Your words are:—"But I come to the matter on which you ask my advice. If Pompey should leave Italy, I think you should return to Rome; for if you follow him, where will end your foreign travelling?" This opinion of yours, I must plainly

confess, made a great impression upon me. And now I see that my flight will involve me in an endless conflict,—a flight which, in your soft mode of phrasing it, you call (προ-  
 copῆ) "foreign travelling." Then follows your oracular  
 opinion (ἡγήσις), which was dated on the 27th of January,  
 to this effect:—"Should Pompey remain in Italy, and there  
 should be no accommodation, the war would, I think, be long  
 protracted. But should he abandon Italy, I fear the founda-  
 tion would be laid of a war, of which the consequences would  
 extend to posterity." Such then is the war with which I am  
 compelled to be actively associated—one that can never be  
 made up (ἀπορροδοῦν), waged against one's own countrymen.—  
 Afterwards, on the 7th of February, when you had seen fur-  
 ther into Pompey's views, you conclude your letter in these  
 terms:—"I would not counsel you to leave Italy, and to fol-  
 low Pompey in his flight. For by so doing you will incur  
 the greatest danger to yourself, without substantially serving  
 the republic, to which, if you stay where you are, you may  
 hereafter be of service." Now, where is the lover of his coun-  
 try, or man of public spirit, whom such advice, coming from  
 the passage a friend, and with such a weight of authority, would  
 not influence. Afterwards, on the 11th of February, on my  
 asking again for your advice, you write as follows:—"You ask  
 whether I think your flight, by which you keep your faith  
 with Pompey, or your stay, by which you desert the patriotic  
 cause, is the more advisable? To which I answer notwithstand-  
 ing, that in the present posture of things I think your sudden  
 and precipitate departure would be of no service to Pompey,  
 and hazardous to yourself. And I think it on the whole better  
 that you and your party should disperse yourselves for a  
 while, and watch the progress of events. But, indeed, I do  
 think it disgraceful at this moment to think of flying." And  
 at this disgraceful act our friend Pompey has for these two  
 years past been meditating. So has his mind been tending  
 for a long time towards the imitation of Sylla and his pro-  
 scriptions. ("Ita Sullaturit animus ejus, et proscripserit  
 ea.") After this, if I rightly remember, when you wrote to



me in more general terms, and I thought I could gather from your expressions something like a desire that I should leave Italy, you shew your detestation of such a step in more decisive language. On the 19th of February you write thus :—"I have in no letter intimated an opinion that if Pompey should leave Italy, you should leave it likewise. Or, if I have furnished ground for such a construction of my words, I do not merely say I have been inconsistent with myself, but positively insane." In another passage of the same letter you say, "Nothing is now left to Pompey but flight, in which I by no means think that you ought to accompany him; nor have I ever so thought." But you discuss all the difficulties which can occur on this subject more accurately in your letter of the 22d of February:—"If Manius Lepidus and Lucius Volcatius should stay, I think you ought to stay likewise. But if Pompey can be preserved, and can make a stand somewhere, I think you may leave this inanimate mass (*νεκρὸν*) around you, and rather submit to be defeated together with him in this contest, than reign with Cæsar in the midst of that despicable throng by which we must then expect to be surrounded." After many observations to the same effect, towards the end of your letter you say:—"But if Lepidus and Volcatius should leave Italy, I am at a loss what to advise (*plane ἀποροῦ*). But in any event, you must be firm in adhering to the course of action you have adopted." If then you were in doubt what advice to give, you certainly cannot hesitate now, as these persons remain in Italy.

After this, on the 25th of February, when Pompey was actually flying, you say:—"In the meantime, you will, I doubt not, remain at Formiæ. There you can most conveniently hear what happens." On the 1st of March, five days after Pompey was gone to Brundisium, you write:—"Then we can deliberate, not indeed as if you stood quite unengaged in this affair, but with a choice more open and entire than would have been the case had you precipitately cast yourself upon Pompey." Your next was on the 4th of March, when, being under an attack of the ague (*ὕπο τῇν ἀγῆαν*), you were obliged

to write very briefly: you yet state your opinion thus:—"Tomorrow I will write more fully, and upon all matters. Thus much, however, I will now say, that I do not repent of having advised you to stay in Italy. And though it is not possible not to regard the question with great anxiety, nevertheless because I think there is less evil in staying than in going away, I hold to my first opinion, and rejoice that you have remained where you are." Afterwards, when I was in great fear and alarm lest I had done any thing to injure my character, you write to me on the 5th of March:—"And yet I am not at all uneasy at your not being with Pompey. If it should be hereafter necessary, it will not be difficult to join him; and join him when you will, your coming will be welcomed by him with joy. But what I say in this respect must be understood with some limitation. For should Cæsar go on as he has begun, sincerely, temperately, and prudently, I should look far into consequences, and consider well what course it would be most advantageous to take."

On the 9th of March, you write that my remaining inactive is much approved of by our friend Peduceus, whose opinion has great weight with me. I am consoled by the assurance which all these your letters give me, that I have hitherto done nothing to disgrace myself. It will be for you to defend your own opinion; with me there is no necessity for any such defence; but I am desirous that others may be made sensible of its rectitude. As to myself, if I have not hitherto acted blameably, I will take care of what is to come. Encourage me to persevere in this conduct, and assist me with your thoughts on every part of it. Nothing has reached us here respecting Cæsar's return. In writing this letter my great advantage has been, that it has occasioned me to read again all those I have received from you.

## TO THE SAME.

You see what comfort there is in our being neighbours; surely then I shall do well to conclude the purchase of the villa in

question. When I was at Tusculanum, our interchange of letters was so frequent that we seemed to be talking together. And this state of things shall be renewed. I have in the meantime, as you advised me, finished the treatises addressed to Varro. I am expecting, however, some answer from you as to the matters I wrote to you about. In the first place, how came you to be informed that a man who like Varro has written so much, (*πολυγραφωτατος*;) without addressing anything to me, should look for such a compliment at my hands. Then of whom can he be jealous, unless it be of Brutus. And if not of him, far less can he be jealous of Hortensius, or any of those who are made to speak in my treatise concerning the republic. I would wish you to be explicit with me on the following point;—whether you remain in your opinion, that I should send my work to Varro, or cease to think it necessary. But of this when we meet.

## TO THE SAME.

My secretary Hilarus had just gone from hence on the 27th, with a letter for you, when your letter-carrier came with your letters dated the day before, which brought me the gratifying news that your daughter, our Attica, desired you not to be uneasy, and your own opinion that she is out of danger (*ακινδυνα*). The authority of your approbation has given great lustre to my speech for Ligarius. Balbus and Oppius write to me that they are wonderfully pleased with it; and, humble as it is, have sent it to Cæsar. You, indeed, had written to me before to the same effect. As to Varro, I care not for the suspicion that I am making him the instrument of extending my own fame. I had determined to include no living characters in my dialogues; but because you tell me that the thing is desired by Varro, and that it is a great object with him, I have finished the dialogues accordingly. I have comprehended the whole Academic system in four books. How well it has been executed I pretend not to say; but as to the statement of the points in argument, nothing can be more accu-

nte. I have in these books put into the mouth of Varro, all that has been so remarkably well collected by Antiochus against the doctrine of universal uncertainty in human knowledge. These I answer myself, and you are the third party in our conversation. Had I brought in Cotta and Varro disputing together as you advised me in your last, I must then have been a silent character. When persons venerable by their age and knowledge are introduced as speakers, the effect is very pleasing: as has been done by Heraclides in many of his dialogues, and by myself in my six books concerning government. My three books on the qualities of an orator are upon the same plan, and with this performance I feel well satisfied; in which the persons speaking were such as necessarily made one silent. They were Crassus, Antonius, the elder Catulus, Caius Julius, the brother of Catulus, Cotta, and Sulpicius. When this dialogue is supposed to have taken place, I was but a boy, and therefore could not have any part in it assigned to me. In what I have composed for present times, in the manner of Aristotle, the speeches of the others are so disposed as to make myself the principal. Thus in my work concerning the ends of things, I have assigned the defence of the Epicurean doctrine to L. M. Torquatus, that of the Stoics to M. Cato, and that of the Peripatetics to M. Piso; all of whom I answer. This I thought I could do without giving any offence, as all the parties are dead. You are aware, that I had brought together Catulus, Lucullus, and Hortensius disputing in this academical conference. The topics, indeed, were not well suited to those characters; for the subtleties which they are made to discuss were such as these persons could never have dreamed of. As soon, therefore, as I read your remarks concerning Varro, I laid hold of them as a sort of unexpected prize. Nothing could be better suited than his character to that species of philosophical enquiry, in which he has always taken a great interest; and so powerful are the arguments which he brings to the subject, that I cannot think my own part in the debate has been better sustained; for the propositions of Antiochus are cast into a

very persuasive form; and expressed with some care and pains by me; so that they combine the acuteness by which the method of Antiochus is distinguished with such graces of style, if I may take credit for any, as are belonging to myself. But whether you think these books may properly be inscribed to Varro, you will seriously consider. Some thoughts have occurred to me on that head. But of this matter when we meet.

## CICERO TO VARRO.

Our friend Caninius has made your wishes known to me in your own words,—that I would write to you whenever I had anything to inform you of, which it was important you should know. That we are in expectation of Cæsar's arrival, is what you know already. But you may like to know that having written to say, that it was his intention to land at Alsium, his friends wrote to him to dissuade him from so doing. They think that his landing at that place would prove troublesome to himself, and inconvenient to many others; and have therefore recommended Ostia as a more convenient place for his disembarkation. For my part, I see no difference. Hirtius, however, tells me, that he, as well as Balbus and Oppius, (who, by the way, are all of them much in your interest,) have written to Cæsar to the same effect. I was willing, therefore, that you should know this, that you might determine where to procure a lodging; or might, if you thought it better, engage one in both these places, for it is uncertain at which of them he may disembark. Another motive with me for telling you what I have heard from these persons, who are such favourites of Cæsar, was to shew you how well I stand with them, and how well I am acquainted with their counsels. Nor do I see any reason for declining their friendship. For surely there is a difference between bearing what must be submitted to, and approving what ought to be condemned. Although, to say the truth, I do not know that there are any to be blamed except those who have been instrumental in giving birth to this civil war. This, indeed, was their volun-



any act. I saw what *you* did not, being absent from Rome at the time, that our friends were desirous of war, while of *Cæsar* it could not so properly be said that he desired it, as that he was not afraid of it. The entering therefore upon the war was matter of purpose and design: what ensued upon it was matter of necessary consequence. It followed that one side or the other must prevail in the contest.

I know that you, equally with myself, foresaw with grief the mischiefs which must ensue whichever of the generals of the contending armies should fall in the battle, for victory in civil war crowns and consummates all its evils. I dreaded even on that side to which you and I were attached; for they threatened cruel vengeance on those who stood neuter: your sentiments and my speeches were alike distasteful to them. If they had obtained the victory we should have experienced the effects of their power, as their resentment exceeded all bounds; as if we had taken any measures for our own security which we did not equally intend for their benefit; or as if they had done better for their country by having had recourse to *Juba* and his elephants than by dying at once in the field, or living with some hope, not the fairest perhaps, but still with some hope, under the present system. But they say we live in a time when the republic is in trouble and disorder. And who can deny this? But let this be the objection of those who have provided for themselves no resources to sustain them under all conditions of life: and to bring the subject to this point, I have been more diffuse than I at first intended.

Now, as I have always seen something truly great in your character, so nothing raises that character higher in my esteem than to see you almost the only man in these tempestuous times settled in port, and enjoying the fruits of your studies; which have been of the noblest kind; and which, both for utility and delight, are to be preferred to all the achievements and the enjoyments in which others place their happiness.

The days you pass at your *Tusculan villa* I consider to be worthy of being called life; and most willingly would I relin-

quish to others all that is called prosperity, to be at liberty, without any interruption, to live in the same happy manner. I imitate your practice as far as circumstances will allow me, and cherish all opportunities of solacing myself with our favourite studies. For who would not concede to us the privilege, when our country either cannot or will not accept our services, of retiring to the sort of life to which I now allude; when it is considered that many philosophic minds, not rightly perhaps, but whether rightly or wrongly, have thought this kind of life to be preferable to that which is occupied in public cares and the labours of the patriot. And why should we not take the advantage of this exemption from public duties, which our country concedes to us, for the prosecution of those studies which, in the opinion of great men, are sufficient of themselves to dispense with the claims which our country has to our services. But I am going beyond the commission which Caninius gave me: for he only required of me to impart to you what I happened to know and you might not; instead of which I am telling you what you already know better than myself. I will, therefore, in future, confine myself to the task of relating to you such passing occurrences as may come to my knowledge, and of which you ought not to be left in ignorance.

## CICERO TO VARRO.

ALTHOUGH to press for the performance of a promised service is so little in accordance with good breeding, that even the vulgar are not accustomed to do it unless the case be an urgent one, I am, nevertheless, so interested in a certain promise you have made me, that I cannot help reminding you of it, if I do not importune you for the performance of it. To this end I have sent you four admonitors,<sup>13</sup> such, perhaps, as you would call not very modest. You are well acquainted with

<sup>13</sup> The dialogues on the academical questions, which appear to have originally consisted of four books, though only a part of one is now extant.

the confident mien of the younger academy;<sup>14</sup> and the admirers I send you are from among the disciples of the later academy. I am apprehensive that you may consider them as importunate, though I commissioned them only as petitioners. To be plain with you, I have long forborne to address some of my works to you, in the expectation of receiving a compliment of the same kind from yourself, intending to requite the favour by a similar return. But as I consider your delay to arise from your anxiety to do it more efficaciously, I could no longer refrain from making known, in the best manner I was able, the union subsisting between us, both in our affections and our studies.

To this end I have framed a discussion, which I suppose to have been carried on between you, myself, and Atticus, when Atticus was with us at your Cuman villa. The part I have given you in the dialogue is to defend, what I considered you as approving, the opinions of Antiochus. You will, I dare say, look upon it as somewhat odd that we shall be made to carry on a conversation together which, in truth, we never held together. But you know the nature and meaning of such compositions.

Hereafter, my dear Varro, I trust we shall agree in the advantage it will bring to us to realize these conversations together: a little late in the day, perhaps, to determine upon this, but the troubled state of the times past must excuse our delay. The moment is now arrived when we are called upon to cultivate this intercourse; and my heart's desire is, that in this more peaceful state of things, in which the city is in a settled, if not in a prosperous condition, we may be able to pursue in conjunction our enquiries and researches. Though, indeed, were this state to continue, reasons might recur for our entering again upon a scene of exertion and honourable cares. But in the actual state of things, what is there but

<sup>14</sup> The founder of the old academy was Plato; of the later, Arcesilas. They differed chiefly as to the degree of evidence on which knowledge is founded. The old maintained that some propositions were certain; the later, that none were more than probable.

these studies for which one would wish to live? For my own part, with these resources, I am hardly reconciled to life; without them it would be insupportable. But of these matters we shall have frequent opportunities of conversing when we meet. In the meantime, I heartily wish the new habitation you have purchased may promote your comfort. I much approve what you have done. Take care of your health.

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It was towards the close of the year 707 u. c. that Julius Cæsar set out on his expedition to Africa, to prosecute the war against Scipio and the other generals on whom, after Pompey's death, the cause of the republic had devolved; and who, in alliance with King Juba, held possession of that province with a large and formidable army. During his absence, and while the fate of the empire hung in suspense upon the issue of this war, Cicero lived a retired life with his books, taking no part in public affairs. In this literary seclusion he entered into a close correspondence with M. Terentius Varro, and proposed a dedication of some of their works respectively to each other. Cicero inscribed his book on Academical Questions to Varro, and Varro his Treatise on the Latin Tongue to Cicero.

Varro was born in the 637th year of Rome, and had served under Pompey, in whose piratical war he is said to have obtained a naval crown. His knowledge was so vast and various as to gain for him the title of the most learned of the Romans. A similarity in their habits and studies, and especially in their opinions on subjects of literature and philosophy, associated Cicero and Varro in the bonds of a durable friendship. While Cicero was mourning over his country's misfortunes, he sought for consolation in proposing to his friend that they should live in the closest communication, philosophical and literary; with an understanding that if their help should at any time be called for towards composing the distractions of the state, they should run to assist, not only as architects, but as masons, to build up again the shattered re-

public; or, if their efforts were rejected in such a service, they would endeavour to diffuse, by their studies and writings, an acquaintance with the best forms of government, and to benefit their country by composing treatises on morals, laws, and social duties.<sup>15</sup>

While Varro was engaged in this friendly correspondence with Cicero, he passed his time in elegant amusements at one or other of his various villas, of which the principal was near the town of Cassinum, where was his valuable and numerous library. Being for some time on the list of Antony's proscriptions, he was secreted by his friends till an edict was passed by M. Plancus, consul, under the seal of the triumphs, excepting him and Messala Corvinus from the meditated slaughter of all the best citizens. His favourite villa was, however, seized upon and plundered by the soldiers executing the orders of Antony, and his celebrated library, which stood in his garden, was rifled and dispersed. From the decisive affair at Actium to the time of his death, which happened in the year of the city 727, when he had reached his ninetieth year, Varro resided at Rome, under shelter of the imperial sway of Augustus, and to the last continuing his habits of study. His final effort in composition was his treatise on agriculture (*De Re Rustica*), which has been pronounced by a good authority to be rather the work of a fine scholar than of an adept in the art of which he treats. This work, and that which he composed on the Latin language, are all that remain of his various performances, except some few fragments which have been preserved. Of his philological work only a portion is now extant; in addition to which a few fragments of a distinct treatise, *De Sermone Latino*, are found in Aulus Gellius. His critical works have left no memorial, and the same may be said of those which he produced on mythological and theological subjects. They are frequently referred to by the early fathers of the church, more particularly by Augustine and Lactantius, and said to have been extant as late as the

<sup>15</sup> Epist. ad. Fam. ix. 2.



beginning of the fourteenth century. It appears that in his philosophy he addicted himself to the opinions of the old academy. The numerous provinces of literature, science, and philosophy, over which the capacious mind of this extraordinary man extended, makes it matter of astonishment that so much of his existence was necessarily absorbed in military service ; but a certain dignity was thrown round the character of the great Romans of this period by the threefold aspect in which they stand before us, as military commanders, senators, and magistrates. In the service of Pompey, to whom Varro had been faithfully attached, two legions had been put under his command in Hispania ulterior, and after the defeat of his colleagues, Afranius and Petreius, in nether Spain, he was left to maintain an unequal war against Cæsar in person. Part of his army deserted, and he was soon compelled with the residue to surrender to the conqueror, who, with his accustomed generosity, gave him his liberty. He proceeded to Dyrrachium to Pompey, but soon afterwards returned to Italy, and spent the remainder of his life in literary retirement.

Julius Cæsar returned to Rome about the end of September in the year 708 u. c. having terminated the war in Spain by his victory over the two sons of Pompey, and entertained the city with the most splendid triumph which Rome had yet seen. At this time Cicero was residing wholly in the country, employing his leisure in literary and philosophical pursuits, till he was persuaded by his friends to quit his retirement, and to employ his authority and his eloquence in supporting the dignity and character of the republic in those days of its declension and danger. Between Cicero and Cæsar there was at this eventful juncture an interchange of much outward regard, in-so-much that Cæsar, to evince his confidence in Cicero, proposed to him to pay him a visit at his villa, which visit was accordingly made, after being expected for some time by Cicero with no small degree of uneasiness, as Cæsar was now at the height of his power, and all his movements were regarded with doubt and apprehension. The account which Cicero gives of this visit in a letter to Atticus is very

self, but very graphic, making the reader all but a guest at a repast which, if the dignity of the persons present, their connection and their contrast, the one the great arbiter of the league, and the other of the sword, when human affairs were in a crisis as important as any the world had yet seen, are fully considered, can hardly be surpassed in interest.

Only five months were interposed between the return of Cæsar from his last victories in Spain, which had placed him high above all the men upon earth, and his sad catastrophe in the senate house, during which interval he stood under the weight of his glory, an object of distrust and dread to many, of wonder and expectation to all; seeing no safety for himself not in his power, and no guaranty for his power but in its unbounded extension. Thus critically circumstanced, we see him seated in familiar conversation at the table of the man who, in the achievements of intellect, had rivalled him in the number of his conquered provinces, and raised to himself a greater monument of substantial glory.

To feel the value and force of this remarkable letter, we should have followed Cæsar through the dire details of his isolating campaigns, kept him in view during the rapid career of his fortune, and given due heed to the demonstrations of that power, which was in him the result of all the constituents of earthly superiority, combined in their most perfect union, and carrying his luminous ascendancy to an altitude unattainable by the world around him, even of the Roman world, at a juncture most prolific of individual greatness. The quality of decision, that spring of conscious power, by which the mind is sustained above the reach of ordinary humanity, was the great distinction of the character of Cæsar. His ambition, not to be satisfied with less than universal empire, having objects which none could share, separated him from all interest from all the world; and in that entireness and singleness of purpose which carries out a master-passion, through all impediments, physical and moral, to its ultimate fulfilment, Julius Cæsar has hardly a parallel in history. Such was the man who, in the refulgent path of his san-

guinary glory, came to the passage of the Rubicon; who standing awhile,<sup>16</sup> not from indecision, but to solemnize, with a decent pause, the step which was to decide the sovereignty of the world, he seemed to gather into one effort the thoughts that for a moment started at their own resolves, arrested the genius of indignant Rome and its frowning destinies.

The Rubicon was passed, and the victories in Italy, Greece, Africa, and Spain rapidly followed, at the end of which, within a little of his tragical end, came self-invited, to pass a day with the great patron of the liberties of his country, the man into whose conquering hands those liberties had been surrendered; and it is thus that Cicero describes this memorable visit:

#### CICERO TO ATTICUS.

O THIS visitor so much dreaded! And yet one whose visit I am not sorry to have received; for it went off most pleasantly. When he came the evening before, on the 18th, to my neighbour Philippus, the house was so crowded with soldiers, that there was hardly a vacant room for Cæsar to sup in. There were about two thousand of them, which made me feel no little uneasiness for the next day. But Barba Cassius set me at ease. He assigned me a guard: made the rest encamp in the fields; so that my house was kept clear. On the 19th, he staid with Philippus till one o'clock; but admitted nobody. He was settling accounts, as I suppose, with Balbus. He then walked by the shore to my house. At two he took the bath. The verses on Mamurra<sup>17</sup> were then read to him. His coun-

<sup>16</sup> *Consecutusque cohortes ad Rubiconem flumen, qui provincie finis erat, paulum consistit; ac reputans quantum moliretur, conversus ad proximos, "etiam nunc, inquit, regredi possumus; quod si ponticulum transierimus, omnis armis agenda erunt."* Suet. Jul. Cæs. l. i. sect. 23.

<sup>17</sup> A Roman knight, who had been Cæsar's general in Gaul, where he acquired great wealth; and was the first Roman who made marble pillars to his house, and cased the same with marble. Plin. Hist. 36. 6. He was satirized together with Cæsar for his luxury and debauchery, by Catullus. And these might have been the verses alluded to—Catull. 27. 55.

entertainment was unchanged. He was rubbed, and anointed, and then he disposed himself at table, after taking an emetic;<sup>19</sup> and eat and drank in a very free and easy manner; for he was entertained hospitably and elegantly; and our discourse resembled our repast in its relish and seasoning. Besides Cæsar's table, his attendants were well provided for in three other rooms; nor was there any deficiency in the provision made for his freedmen of lower quality, and his slaves; but those of the better sort were elegantly entertained. Need I add more. I acted as man with man. Yet he was not the man to whom one would say at parting, "I pray let me have your visit repeated when you come this way again." Once is enough.<sup>20</sup> Not a word passed between us on business,<sup>21</sup> but much literary talk.<sup>22</sup> To make short of the matter, he was perfectly pleased and easy. He talked of spending one day at Puteoli; another at Baiæ. You have thus the account of the day's entertainment—an entertainment not agreeable, but still not troublesome to me. I shall stay here a little longer, and then to Tusculum.

As he passed by Dolabella's villa, his troops marched close by the side of his horse, on the right and left; which was done no where else. I had this from Nicias.<sup>23</sup>

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We will now dismiss this great man, with a short account of his departure out of a world, which had so long resounded

<sup>19</sup> A custom common with the Romans, and mentioned by Cicero to have been done by Cæsar on different occasions. It was thought conducive to health as well as luxury. See Senec. Consol. ad Helv. 9; vomunt ut edant, edunt ut vomant, and Sueton. 12; Dio. 65. 734.

<sup>20</sup> Semel satis est.

<sup>21</sup> σπουδαίων οὐδὲν in sermone.

<sup>22</sup> φιλολογία multa.

<sup>23</sup> Cicero's and Philip's villas were near each other on the Formian coast, near Cajeta. Dolabella, the third husband of Tullia, Cicero's daughter, though apparently always attached to the cause of Cæsar, was a fickle, violent, and suspected man. After his cruel treatment of Trebonius, he ended his own life by the sword.

with his name and actions; leaving his character to be gathered from his various correspondence, which may be considered in themselves as a marvellous monument of genius, and as a record of antiquity unrivalled in importance and interest. We have the following account from an able pen of the last hours of Cicero.

Cicero was at his Tusculan villa, with his brother and nephew, when he first received the news of the proscription, and of their being included in it. It was the design of the triumvirate to keep it secret, if possible, to the moment of execution, in order to surprise those whom they had destined to destruction, before they were aware of the danger, or had time to escape. But some of Cicero's friends found means to give him early notice of it; upon which he set forward presently with his brother and nephew, for Astura, the nearest villa which he had towards the sea, with intent to transport themselves directly out of the reach of their enemies. But Quintus, being wholly unprepared for so sudden a voyage, resolved to turn back with his son to Rome, in confidence of lying concealed there, till they could provide money and necessaries for their support abroad. Cicero, in the meantime, found a vessel ready for him at Astura, in which he presently embarked; but the winds being cross and turbulent, and the sea wholly uneasy to him, after he had sailed about two leagues along the coast, he landed at Circæum, and spent a night near that place, in great anxiety and irresolution. The question was, what course he should steer; whether he should fly to Brutus, or to Cassius, or to S. Pompeius. But after all his deliberations, nothing pleased him so much as the expedient of dying:<sup>23</sup> so that, as Plutarch says, he had some thoughts of returning to the city, and killing himself in the house of Cæsar Octavianus, in order to leave the guilt and odium of his blood upon his perfidy and ingratitude.

But the importunity of his servants prevailed with him to

<sup>23</sup> Utrumve Brutum, an Cassium an Sextum Pompeium peteret; Omnia illi displicuisse præter mortem. Senec. Suasor. vii.



and forwards to Cajeta, where he went again on shore, to repose himself in his Formian villa, about a mile from the coast; weary of life, and the sea, and declaring, that he would die in that country which he had so often saved. Here he slept soundly for several hours, till his servants forced him into his litter, and carried him away towards the ship, through the private ways, and walks of his woods; having just heard that the soldiers were already come to the country in quest of him, and were not far from the villa. As soon as they were gone, the soldiers arrived at the house; and finding him gone, went after him and overtook him in the wood.

The leader of this band was M. Popilius Lænas, whom Cicero had formerly defended, and saved in a capital cause. As soon as the soldiers appeared, Cicero's servants prepared themselves to defend their master; but he commanded them to set him down, and make no resistance; then looking upon his executioners with a firmness which almost daunted them, and thrusting his neck as far as he could out of the litter, he bade them do their work, and take what they wanted; upon which they presently cut off his head, and both his hands, which they carried to Rome and presented to Antony; who ordered them to be fixed upon the rostra, the head between the hands; a sad spectacle, and viewed with tears by the whole Roman people.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The two Quintus's, the brother and the brother's son, as is stated above, had left Cicero, in his flight towards the sea, and returned to Rome, where they hoped to furnish themselves with the necessary means of escaping into Macedonia, and to have concealed themselves in the meantime in some obscure part of the city. Their efforts were unsuccessful. The son was first discovered, and refusing to disclose the retreat of the father, was put to the rack; till the father, to stop the agonies of the son, came from his hiding place, and voluntarily surrendered himself; making no other request to his executioners than that they should put him to death the first of the two. The son urged the same request, to spare him the misery of being the spectator of his father's murder; so that the assassins, to satisfy them both, taking each of them apart, killed them by agreement at the same time.

Pomponius Atticus saved himself from the fate of Cicero, and his brother and nephew, by his long course of cautious and temporizing measures. It is to this wariness and circumspection that we are to attribute the entire sup-

pression and disappearance of his numerous letters to Cicero; which he supposed to have withdrawn from Tiro, after Cicero's death. The marriage of his daughter with M. Agrippa, which is said to have been proposed and brought about by Antony, introduced him to the friendship and familiarity of Augustus. His granddaughter was afterwards married to Tiberius Caesar. He lived to old age, in peace and honour; but as Seneca observes, his name was preserved from oblivion by the letters of Cicero. "*Nomen Attici perire Ciceronis epistolæ non sinunt: nihil illi profuisset gener Agrippa, et Tiberius progener, et Drusus Caesar, pronepos: inter tam magna nomina taceretur, nisi Cicero illum applicuisset.*" Senec. Epist. xxi.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## OF THE LETTERS OF AUGUSTUS CÆSAR.

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR was a considerable writer of letters, but we have very few of them in existence. Suetonius has preserved three, written upon no very important occasions. Aulus Gellius has also given us one of his epistles, written to his son Caius, one of the sons of Agrippa by his daughter Julia, which is rather a pleasing specimen of a grandfather's epistolary style.

8 Kalend. October.

I write to thee! my dear little Caius, as dear to me as my eyes, whose presence I always feel the want of, when absent from me, but particularly on such a day as yesterday; my eyes looked earnestly for you, my dear Caius, who, wheresoever you might happen then to be, didst I hope, forget to celebrate my 64th birth-day as a moment of joyful interest; for, as you see, I have passed through the 64th year, the grand climacteric<sup>1</sup> of old age. I pray God that to the time which remains to me, it may be permitted to pass through it in a prosperous state of the republic, being preserved to me, and performing the part of a good citizen worthy to succeed me in the station which I now hold.

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We have two of his letters to Tiberius, from which it appears that among his recreations was that of playing with dice for amusement, and especially in the month of December both on festal and common days. The letter which fol-

<sup>1</sup> κλιμακτήρια

lows is said by Suetonius to have been written with his own hand:—

“ I supped, my dear Tiberius, with my usual party; Venus and Salvius, the father, were at the table. We played yesterday and to day, between the repasts, at the old morris game, (*γερωνικῶς*). When the dice were thrown, if the Canis or Senio were turned up, a penny was added to the stakes, which he was entitled to take for himself who happened to ‘throw Venus.’ ”<sup>2</sup>

And again, in another letter to the same person, he proceeds as follows:—

“ We have passed the festival of Minerva, my dear Tiberius, pleasantly enough, for we have played every day, and have kept the table warm. Your brother bore his losses with a bad grace. In the end, however, he did not come off much the loser; but after a run of ill luck, fortune turned somewhat unexpectedly in his favour. As for me, I have lost 20,000 sesterces, which happened from my playing, as my habit is, with little regard to my own rights; for if I had strictly exacted what I was justly entitled to, or had kept back what I gave up, I should have gained 50,000; but I prefer this mode of acting, for it is this kindness towards others on which I build my hope of immortalizing my memory.”

The following extracts of letters, produced also by Suetonius, are interesting, as evincing a discreet and affectionate care of his family in this mighty prince, and especially his kind consideration for Claudius, the youthful son of Germanicus:—

“ I have talked with Tiberius,<sup>3</sup> as you desired me, my dear

<sup>2</sup> A French translator of Suetonius subjoins the following note:—“Ce jeu probablement se jouoit avec des osselets; Pline dit qu'on en employoit quatre qui produisoient trente-cinq coups, dont quatre dans ceux où les quatre faces se ressembloient, dix-huit dans ceux où il y en avoit trois égaux, et un seul quand tous les osselets étoient différens; chaque coup avoit le nom d'un dieu ou d'une bête ou d'une courtisane; le coup le plus avantageux s'appeloit le coup de Venus: Ce jeu d'osselets étoit en Grèce le jeu des enfans, et à Rome celui des vieillards.”

<sup>3</sup> The husband of Livia before she was taken from him by Augustus.

Livia, as to what is to be done with your grandson Tiberius<sup>a</sup> at the approaching festival of Mars. We both agreed that we must determine without delay the plan which it will be necessary to adopt respecting him; for if he is fit and well constituted for it, why should we hesitate to lead him through the same steps of preferment by which his brother has been gradually advanced? But if we think, upon due consideration, that he is defective and blemished, both in mind and body, we must take care not to expose either him or ourselves to the derision and raillery of persons whose habit it is to divert themselves at the expense of the infirmity of others; for we shall always be fluctuating if at every juncture we are considering afresh what we are to do; not having determined beforehand whether he is capable or not of holding any post of honour. At present, indeed, what are the things which you are consulting about? I have no objection to his exercising the sacerdotal function at the ensuing festival, if he is content to put himself under the guidance of the son of Silanus, his kinsman, to be by him kept from doing any thing which may subject him to ridicule. I do not think it prudent to suffer him to be a spectator of the games from the imperial seat, for if he sits in the front of the spectacles he will be generally noticed. I do not approve of his going to the Alban Mount, or of his being at Rome during the Latin holidays; for if it is proper for him to follow his brother to the mountain, why is it not equally proper for him to exercise magistracy in the city? Thus, my Livia, you have my opinion, which is, that we should at once come to a fixed determination respecting this whole matter, that we may not remain in a state of fluctuation between hope and fear. You may submit this part of my letter to the perusal of Antonia."<sup>b</sup>

In a subsequent letter to Livia, he expresses himself thus on the same subject:—"During your absence I will take care that the young Tiberius<sup>c</sup> shall eat at my table, to avoid

<sup>a</sup> The prænomen of the Emperor Claudius, son of Drusus, and grandson of Livia.

<sup>b</sup> Wife of Drusus, and mother of Claudius.

<sup>c</sup> Claudius.



his dining with his friends Sulpitius and Athenodorus, and wish that the poor little prince may carefully select some body whom he may more earnestly and discreetly propose to himself as a model in gesture, carriage, and deportment. He is altogether without grace before men of spirit and intelligence, though when he is self-collected, he manifests a good disposition." And again he writes:—"Let me die, my dear Livia, if I have not been most agreeably surprised at witnessing with what skill your little grandson declaims. Could I have expected such success on the part of a person who generally expresses himself so ill?"

The historian adds, that there is no doubt that Augustus trusted no office but that of the augural priesthood to Claudius, on account of his great defects. In his testament he placed him in the third rank of his inheritors, and gave him only a sixth of his goods, leaving him no more than about 800 sester tia.

The following extract of a letter from Augustus to Tiberius, his adopted son and successor, is curious, as manifesting the high opinion at one time entertained by the emperor, of that most profligate and unprincipled voluptuary; and affording an example of the rapidity with which those who set out well on no better motive than interest or expediency may pass through the stages of infamy to the utmost bound of moral debasement, while the memory of what they have missed and what they have marred, remains with them to deepen the shades of a guilty conscience.

Suetonius introduces his extract of this letter with the following observations:—"I cannot but think that in an affair of so great importance, this most circumspect and prudent prince (Augustus Cæsar) did not act without due consideration in his commendation of Tiberius; but that, weighing his virtues against his vices, he judged the balance to incline on the virtuous side, especially when we find him publicly declaring that he had adopted him for the sake of the republic, and in some of his epistles representing him as a man consummate in the art of war, and the stay and support of the commonwealth."

The extract is as follows:—"Farewell, my dear Tiberius! May you successfully proceed in your military career, exerting yourself in your command for me and for the Muses. I must address you as my most cherished friend, bravest of men, and a most skilful general. Farewell, and make the due preparation for your winter quarters. I do really think, my dear Tiberius, that amidst such difficulties as you now have to combat with, no one could have conducted himself more prudently than you have done, especially when your soldiers second you with so little courage. All those who have been with you declare that the following verse would be applicable to you:

*Unus homo nobis vigilando restituit rem.\**

Whenever I have any prospect before me that demands very mature reflection, or which occasions me any particular uneasiness or embarrassment, I regret my distance from my Tiberius, and I am put in mind of the words of Diomedes in Homer:—"When he accompanies me, we are both rescued, as if from the fire, so able is he in counsel." When I hear and I read that you are so wasted by continual labour, may I perish if my whole body is not seized with a trembling! And I beseech you to spare yourself, lest if we should hear of your being sick, both your mother and myself should die with grief, and the prosperity of the empire should be endangered. Unless I can hear of your being well, I should be totally regardless of my own health. I pray the gods to preserve you, and to keep you in a sound and effective state now and always, if they have any favour towards the Roman people."

\* A parody upon the verse of Ennius given us in Cicero de Senectute.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## LETTERS OF SENECA.

SENECA, although he hardly knew how to lay by the philosopher in his familiar moments, seems to have had a just idea of the proper scope and characteristics of good letter-writing. He was professedly on the side of a free and colloquial style. One of his epistles to Lucilius is introduced with the following remarks:—"You complain of the little care I take in polishing the letters which you receive from me. The truth is, that the easy and unstudied diction in which I express myself in conversing with you, is just that which I am desirous of carrying into my correspondence with you, so that it may have nothing in it borrowed or fictitious. I wish so to write as to impress upon you the conviction that I think and feel what I express." In other places he insists with his characteristic energy on the use to be made of correspondence as an efficacious vehicle of salutary counsel. "You are right in requesting a more frequent epistolary commerce between us. That mode of discoursing is the most profitable which makes its way to the mind piece-meal. Diffuse lectures prepared for popular assemblies come less intimately home to the understanding, though characterised by more noise and notoriety. Philosophy, in effect, is neither more nor less than good counsel; and the talent of giving counsel in simple and perspicuous terms is very rare. There are occasions when more formal instructions are necessary, as when reluctant minds are to be forcibly impelled; but where the object is to convey knowledge, not to excite aspirations after it, we do wisest in adopting in our letters the language of common intercourse."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ep. xxxviii.

Such was Seneca's theory concerning letter-writing. He has given us, however, but few examples of that familiar style of which he has left us his commendation. His letters to Lucilius were the vehicles of his noble thoughts—such as are not of a character to enter gracefully into union with topics of common and ephemeral interest, or with the details of incidental intercourse; still less with associations of a gay and humorous cast. There are, however, among the letters of this great Roman, some specimina of that pensively playful kind, of which we have so many pleasing examples in the correspondence of some of our best Christian moralists.

## SENECA TO LUCILIUS.

WHITHERSOEVER I turn myself, spectacles, reminding me of old age, present themselves. I went the other day to my country house just without the city, and was complaining how much it seemed out of repair, notwithstanding the money which I had laid out upon it. "It may be so," said my bailiff, "but it is from no want of care in me. I have done all in my power to keep it up, but the truth is, it is very old." Now I must know this villa was of my own raising, and has come to its present state under my hands. What then have I to expect, if stones laid down in my own time have begun to show symptoms of decay. Being put by this a little out of humour with the man, I laid hold of the first occasion of finding fault. "It seems to me," said I, "that these plane-trees have been neglected. How rotten and withered are the branches! In what a wretched and foul condition are the stems! This would not have happened if any one had surrounded it, and given it water." Upon this my bailiff answered heartily that he had done all he could, and spared no pains, but that they were old. Now, between ourselves, I had planted these trees, and witnessed their first foliage. Turning to the gate, I said, "And pray who is that decrepit old fellow whom you have, properly enough, placed here, with his

face turned towards the door?<sup>2</sup> Where in the world did I pick up this man? What whim is this, to bring this strange corpse into my house?" "What! don't you know me?" said the old man; "I am Felicio, to whom you used formerly to bring playthings. I am the son of Philositus, your former bailiff: your little favourite playfellow." "Surely," said the man, is out of his mind. He my little playfellow! That thing is impossible. But yet it may be, for I see he is shedding his teeth."

Thus am I indebted to my villa for reminding me, at every turn, of my old age. Let us embrace it, let us love it. For him who knows how to use it, it is full of enjoyment. For it is most grateful towards the end of the season. Youth, when one is just losing it, is the most attractive. The last potato is the most agreeable to the lovers of wine; and every pleasure is most valued when it is coming to its end. Death, when it is gradual, and not precipitate, is really pleasant. I don't fear to pronounce a man standing on the very ultimate verge of life to have his solace; or at least we may say that the absence of all want is itself a sort of pleasure. How sweet it is to have lived out, and taken leave of, all anxious desires!

But you will say that it is painful to have death before one's eyes. My answer is in the first place, that it ought always to be before the eyes as well of the young as of the old; for we are not summoned as we stand in the register. And then there is no one so old as to make it sinful to expect another day. Every day is another step in life. All our time consists of parts: of circles within circles of different orbits; some of which comprehends the rest; and thus compasses the whole life of man from the beginning to the end of life. One includes the years of youth; another circumscribes only

<sup>2</sup> Alluding to the ancient custom of laying out a dead body near the threshold, at the entrance or doorway.

Ὅς μοι ἐν ἐκλήσει διδάσκαλος οὐκ ἔστι χαλκῶ  
Κύρται ἀνα προθύρον τετραμμένος.

Hom. Il. i. xix. 212; and see Virg. Æn. ii. 30. Pers. Sat. iii. 103.



period of childhood. A single year includes all those portions of time, of which the whole of existence is but the multiplication. A month lies within a narrower circle, and a day within one still of smaller extent. And yet the day has its beginning and its end, from the rising to the setting sun. Senecius, who from his obscurity got the name of Scotinus, says "dies par omni est:" which some interpret, as if he had said, they are equal as to hours, which is true enough; if a day is a period of twenty-four hours, in that respect days are equal; since the night takes up what the day lacks. Another holds the meaning to be, that one day is but the counterpart of the other. After all, the longest space of time exhibits only what may be found in one day—light and darkness, with their vicissitudes and alternations. Every day could be therefore so ordered and disposed, as if it closed a series, and were the measure and completion of our existence. Pacuvius, who made Syria his own country by long residence in it, when he had regaled himself with wine and mirth, as at a funeral banquet, caused himself to be carried in supper to his bed-chamber, that amidst the applause of his companions, the following words might be chanted to him—*βίβλωται, βίβλωται*,—He hath lived, he hath lived; and such was his practice every day. Now this that was done by him with a bad conscience, let us do with a good one; and when retiring to our rest, let us with composed and cheerful spirits have to say "Vixi, et quem cursum dederat fortuna peregi." If God should vouchsafe us a to-morrow, let us receive it with joy and thankfulness.

He is the happiest man, and the secure possessor of himself, who waits for the morrow without solicitude:—he who goes to bed at night saying, "I have lived" in the full sense of the phrase, rises every morning with a day gained.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This letter is concluded with a precept borrowed from Epicurus, in which self-murder is vindicated and recommended, under circumstances of desperation, to which Seneca unhappily assents. It was far, however, from being diversally assented to by the Pagan world; but on the contrary, was con-

The following letter upon elocution is well worthy of the attention of the scholar and the gentleman.

TO LUCILIUS.

You merit my thanks, Lucilius, for your frequent correspondence; for you thereby shew yourself to me in the only way you can. I never receive a letter from you, that does not immediately bring me into your company. If the pictures of our absent friends are agreeable to us, which revive the remembrance of them, and soften the regret occasioned by their absence, by a solace, that is unsubstantial and delusive; how much more delightful are letters, which bring before us their very footsteps,—the very impressions and traces of their characters. Whatever is sweet in the aspect of those we love, is in a manner realized in a letter by the very impression of their hands.

You say you heard that Serapio, the philosopher, when he came to Sicily, was wont to roll out his words, which he not only poured forth without stopping, but pressed and crowded them together in such a manner, that one utterance hardly sufficed for them. This I by no means approve in a philosopher, whose enunciation, like his life, ought to be composed; for nothing is well ordered that proceeds with precipitation and hurry. The more animated style, and that which proceeds without intermission like a fall of snow, is in Homer attributed to the orator by profession; but the milder form, sweeter than honey, is represented as coming from the aged Nestor. I would wish it to be your opinion, that a rapid and verbose way of speaking is more characteristic of one who goes about hawking his wares, than of one who is treating of a great and serious subject; and whose office it is to teach. Neither do I think that words should distil drop by drop, any more than that they should run in a rapid current.

denied by Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Cicero; and even Brutus himself, though he fell by his own hands, condemned the act in Cato.

ed : They should neither keep our ears upon the stretch, nor oppress them with tediousness. Poverty and paucity of words render an audience inattentive, and we are wearied by a slow and hesitating utterance ; though, at the same time it must be owned, that what comes after being somewhat waited for settles more in the mind, than what passes on with a flying speed. And remember, that men are said to deliver what they teach ; but what is presented to us in this flying manner cannot be said to be delivered to us. And remember, too, that an oration which professes to have truth for its object should be characterised by an unstudied simplicity. A popular harangue has little to do with truth ; its object is to move the multitude, and to hurry along with it the ear of the unreflecting. It waits not to be handled—it vanishes from observation. But how can that rule others, which submits to no rule itself. Moreover, a discourse which is intended to heal distempered minds ought to descend into them. No medicine can be effectual unless it be retained sometime in the system. A hurried speech has little else than sound and inanity : it makes more noise than impression. My fears are to be quieted ; my passions are to be controlled ; my suspicions to be dispersed ; luxury is to be restrained ; avarice to be reprov'd. And which of these things can be effected in a hurry ? What physician can cure his patients as he flies. And what pleasure can we receive from a mere noisy torrent of words poured upon us without selection. As it is sufficient once to have witnessed a thing which we might scarcely have thought credible, so it is abundantly enough to have once heard one of these men who thus exercise their lungs. What can any one learn ? what can he follow ? Or how can that man enter into the minds of others whose oratory is confused, and his words always at their full speed so as not to be stopped. As those who are running down hill cannot stop when they please, but the body is hurried along by its own weight against its will, so does an impetuous volubility of speech lose the management of itself ; while it is wholly unsuited to the gravity of philosophy ; which ought to

plant and not to project its words; and to proceed in orderly method. What! you will say; shall a discourse never mount above this level? Why not? provided it do it without the sacrifice of dignity; which commotion and violence are sure to destroy. Let it have what strength it may, so as it be kept within correct bounds. Let it flow an uninterrupted stream, but not rush like a torrent. I would hardly allow an orator, much less a philosopher to use such a velocity of speech, as to lose his proper control of himself; and to break through the rules of propriety. He can the judge, who may sometimes be a person unskilled and inexperienced, follow a speaker, whom ostentation, or affect of passion hurries on beyond his power of self management. Let his speed be regulated by the capacity of the ears he is addressing to imbibe his instructions. Pay, therefore, regard to those who value what is said for its quantity, rather than its quality. This then is the eloquence which I require in a wise man. I do not expect from him an elocution, that knows no pause. I would rather it should be carried forward than run on of itself. But I am the more anxious to keep you from this mistaken course, as you cannot enter upon it without first dismissing all sense of decorum. You must put on a face of brass, and almost deafen yourself with your own vociferation: for in this sort of heedless rapidity you will be sure to throw out things, which you will much rather not have said. This, I repeat, is a mode of proceeding which you cannot adopt without the sacrifice of that modesty which credit is now given you. And even this art of rapid speaking, is not to be acquired without daily exercise, and casting off your mind from things, to devote it to the study of words which after having made yourself master of, you will be in need of an equal degree of diligence to restrain. As a modest gait and carriage become a wise man, so does a plain and unostentatious discourse. The sum of all I have said is this, I would have you adopt a style of speaking slow and distinct.

The admiration excited by the succeeding letter is softened into sorrow when we reflect on the struggle Seneca had to maintain with the ignorance and prejudices of his age and country. Who that has perused the following beautiful effusion can fail to recognise in the brother of Gallio the persuasive efficacy of those blessed truths which had silently informed with a new spirit the whole of the gentile philosophy.

## TO LUCILIUS.

THERE cannot be a better or more wholesome design than that which you have formed, of persevering in the pursuit of wisdom: but how foolish it would be to stop at mere wishes for that which it is in your power to obtain. We need not for that purpose lift up our hands to heaven, nor pray the ædile to admit us to the ear of the image, that we may be the better heard; God is near thee, He is with thee, He is in thee. Thus far will I venture to say, Lucilius, a holy spirit resides within us, the observer of our good and evil propensities, our guide and guardian: as we treat this monitor, so he treats us: and sure I am, no good man is without God. Without his help, what man could ever rise above the power of fortune? It is He that inspires us with noble and erect thoughts. What god I will not venture to say; but that a god dwells in the bosom of every good man is certain. If suddenly there stands before you an ancient grove of more than ordinary grandeur, with its branches so closely interwoven that they shut out the view of the sky; the towering trees, the solitude of the place, and its awful and continuous shade, cannot but impress you with the sense of a present Deity: if, when a cave is seen at the foot of a mountain, worn into the solid stone by natural causes, the gloomy excavation fills the mind with a sort of religious fear: if we look with a feeling of awe on the sources of mighty rivers: if the sudden eruption of a vast volume of water from the secret places of the earth is consecrated by an altar: if hot springs, mysteriously issuing from the earth, attract our adoration: if



lakes are held sacred for their opacity and depth; surely the feeling can be no less solemn with which one looks upon a man standing untroubled in the midst of dangers,—untainted by impure desires,—happy in adverse fortunes,—placid in storm—looking down as from an eminence upon the men of this world,—on a level with the gods themselves; does not a feeling of homage take possession of the mind of the beholder? Are you not compelled to say, the thing I contemplate is too great and lofty to be considered as resembling in its nature the little body it dwells in? A divine power seems to descend upon it from above: it can be nothing less than a celestial influence that actuates a mind at once excelling and modest, passing by the things of earth as too little to engage and arrest its thoughts, and looking with scorn upon the objects of our ordinary fears and wishes. A thing so great cannot keep its erect posture without the special support of God within us. As the beams of the sun reach indeed to the earth, but have their home in the place from whence they emanate, so a mind of this grand and holy character, and sent among us, it would seem, to bring us to a nearer acquaintance with what is truly divine, has its converse with men, but immovably adheres to the place of its origin; on that it depends, to that it looks, and to that its energies are directed; while, with a conscious superiority, it takes a part in the things of this world.

And what is this but a mind that leans upon nothing but its own virtue? For what can be more absurd than to praise in a man that which is not his own; what greater folly than to admire in one man what may in a moment be transferred to another. A steed is not made better by his golden bridle. It is one thing to see a lion tamed to submission, and stroked and dressed by his keeper, and another to see him with his spirit unbroken, and unreduced by the hand of man: fierce and impetuous, as nature designed him to be, beautiful in his wildness, and decked with terror, in which consists his majesty: how much is this unspoiled animal to be preferred to one that has been deprived of his strength by confinement, and covered with plates of gold.

No one has a right to glory but in that which is properly his own. The property of the vine is its fertility ; and nothing is to be commended in man but that which is no less his own. He has a fine family and a fine house, large farms and much money at interest ; still nothing of all this is *in* him, but *about* him. Praise only that in him which can neither be given him, nor be taken from him.

Do you ask what is truly a man's own ? It is his mind, and the faculty of reason kept entire within it. Man is a rational animal : he has, therefore, his own proper good complete in himself, if he has accomplished the purpose for which he was born. But what is it which this his faculty of reason requires of him ? The easiest thing in the world, if it were not that the common madness of the world made it difficult,—to live according to his proper nature. We urge each other on in vice. And what hope have we of being restored to soundness of thinking, while we are driven on by the common depravity, and there is no one to restrain us.

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The next letter is not surpassed by any thing from the pen of Seneca. It treats of a very elegant and weighty subject in a playful and easy style ; and it would be difficult to find a letter of Cicero in which the agreeable and useful appear together in closer union. True composure of mind, its proper place, its independence of circumstances, its collectedness amidst general disturbance, and its secluded seat in the recesses of the bosom, are the great subjects of the letter : and it gives us, by the way, some instances of the affinity between all nations and times in the habits of coarse and ordinary life.

#### TO LUCILIUS.

I REALLY begin to think that silence is not so necessary as it may seem to the man of study. Behold me situated where every variety of noise clamours around me. I lodge directly over the public bath. Imagine all kinds of sounds to which one's ears are the most irreconcilable. I will begin with

those stout fellows who come here to practise boxing. When they throw about their hands with a load of lead in them, and labour at their work, or imitate those who do so, I hear the groans; and as often as they send forth their breath, after long holding it in, I hear their sharp and hissing respirations. When one of those idle fellows whose occupation it is to annoy the common wrestlers comes in my way, I am sure to hear the report of his slap upon his patient's shoulders, which he inflicts with the flat or hollow palm of his hand; but if a ball player comes in and begins to count his balls, I am really almost done for. To these annoyances you must add the swaggering blusterer, with his foul manners and loud tongue, the apprehended thief, and the bawling of one who is delighted with hearing his own voice echo through the bath; then comes the splashing sound of the bather, who leaps into the pool; and then the hubbub of the talkers, whose voices would be bearable enough if one heard only these. Nor must you leave out the depilatory operator, whistling out his shrill and squeaking tones to draw attention, and never silent but when he is at his work, or has got some other to call for his service. Next come the confectioner, the seller of sausages and cakes, the retailers from the cooks' shops, with their multifarious cries, and the venders of small wares with their peculiar tone. Surely, you say, you must be deaf, or have nerves of iron, who can be in your senses amidst such various and dissonant sounds; when the mere greetings of his acquaintance almost kills our friend Crysippus. But to tell you the truth, all this noise no more disturbs me than running or falling water: though I have heard that to a certain people on the borders of the river Nile it seemed a sufficient reason for changing the site of their city, that they were unable to bear the noise of the waterfalls. As for me, I am more distracted by an articulate utterance than by any mere noise. This draws off the mind, the other merely strikes upon the ear.

Among the noises which have not the effect of distracting my mind, I reckon the carriages passing to and fro, an artificer lodging in the same house with me, a sawyer next door,

a man sweating at his turnery, or making trial of his pipes, screaming rather than singing. The sound, indeed, which is taken up after intermissions is more annoying to me than that which is continued. But I have been so inured to these things, that methinks I could hear a boatswain vociferating orders to his rowers at the very top of his voice without disposure. I force my mind to be so intent upon itself as not to be called off by external objects. Whatever noise prevails without I regard it not, so long as there is no tumult within, no jarring contention between cupidity and fear, no strife between avarice and luxury, no one propensity at war with another; for what avails the tranquillity of the region round, if the interior is torn with contending passions. The poet says—

*All things, at night, lay hush'd in soft repose.*

But this is not the general case, there is no soft repose but what is the effect of reason. The night of itself rather brings inquietude than dispels it: it only varies the scene of our mental sufferings: for the dreams of those who sleep in their anxieties are as full of trouble as the accidents of the day. True tranquillity is the indication and expansion of a sound mind. Look at that man who anxiously seeks his repose in the stillness of his family; for the sake of whose quiet, and that no sound may reach his ears, all the host of his servants are ordered to keep a profound silence, and those who approach him are hardly to touch the ground. Yet is he turning from side to side, and would fain dose for an instant; still complaining that he is disturbed by noises which he does not hear. And what, now, do you think is the cause of all this? It is his mind, which is the source of its own trouble. This requires to be appeased; here there is a sedition that must be quelled. The body may rest in seeming repose, but if you take that as the test of tranquillity, you are mistaken: rest is sometimes restless. It is better, therefore, to engage ourselves in some active employment, or the cultivation of some liberal

arts, when idleness, with its accompanying impatience of self, has seized upon us. Great generals, when they perceive the soldiers to grow restless and disobedient, put them to some special labour, or occupy them in some enterprize or expedition. Those who are tied down to business have no time for idle waste; nor is there a more simple certainty than that for the vices which idleness engenders employment is the only cure.

We flatter ourselves with the pleasing thought of retiring from the wearisomeness of public business, and the irksomeness of some uneasy station; but in the very shade of that retreat, into which our timidity or fatigue have driven us, ambition makes new shoots: it may seem to have been destroyed and rooted out; when it has, in truth, only disappeared for a time, discomfited and disappointed by opposition and bad success. We may say the same of luxury, which may seem at one time to have given way to better habits, but again it proffers its bribes to the converts to temperance, and in the midst of our new professions of frugality, surprises us with a renewal of indulgences, left only for a while, not banished or condemned, but rather to be pursued with greater vehemence from being better concealed. All vices are moderated by exposure; as bodily diseases, when, instead of lurking in the system, they break out upon the surface, and shew their characteristic virulence, are more within the reach of cure. Avarice, ambition, and the other maladies of the mind, may then be regarded as taking their most fatal hold when they work secretly behind a healthy exterior. We seem at our ease when we are far from being so. If we act towards ourselves with good faith, if we have in right earnest sounded our retreat, if we have really learned to despise the vain but unsubstantial things of the world, nothing, as I have before said, will be able to call us from ourselves. Neither noise nor melody will disturb our cogitations, now become solid and sure. That disposition is but of a flimsy texture, and unable to retreat upon itself, which is startled at every sound and every accident; light as it is, it harbours an anxious



spirit, and an internal dread, that makes it inquisitive and apprehensive; reminding us of the lines of Virgil—

*I who so bold and dauntless just before  
The Grecian darts and shocks of lances bore,  
At every shadow now am seized with fear,  
Not for myself, but for the charge I bear.*

We have here first presented to us, in the same individual, a wise man, whom neither brandished spears, nor the clashing arms of the close encounter, nor the tumbling ruins of the captured city could affright; and then a man unused to danger, full of alarms, startled at every noise, whom every sound terrifies like the noise of a multitude, and the slightest motion deprives of his senses. It is his burthen that makes him thus timorous. Choose whom you will among the men of prosperous fortune, who gather much, and carry much, you will see him full of fears and anxieties for that by which he is accompanied and encumbered. Know, therefore, that then only you are in a composed state, when nothing that clamours around you seems to be your concern; when no sound gives you alarm, whether it be the voice of blandishment, the voice of menace, or only the voice of vacancy. What! you will then say, is it not sometimes agreeable to be free from noise and brawling? It is so: and, as I take your hint, I will certainly migrate from this spot. If I have been willing to try and exercise my patience, where is the necessity for my doing this penance any longer? Nor will I forget that there is, after all, an easy method of excluding sounds which it is not convenient to hear by stopping one's ears—the remedy used by Ulysses to preserve his companions from the syrens.

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I transcribe a letter of this extraordinary Roman to his friend, in which his great thoughts and high principles are set forth in language becoming their dignity. The love and veneration he declares himself to feel for men deservedly

called great, indicates an enthusiasm in the cause of virtue, which it is impossible to contemplate without holding in great honour the noble conceptions of moral excellence that raised the standard of Seneca's philosophy to so near an approach to the gospel pattern. The general style of the letter is on a level with its exalted sentiments:—

## TO LUCILIUS.

You were yesterday with us. If I were only to mention such a yesterday, without coupling you with it, you might complain. I have added, therefore, you were with us: for you are always with me. Some friends stepped in,—such for whom we generally make a larger fire; not such as breaks forth from the kitchens of those who live splendidly, alarming the watchmen, but a modest one, enough to shew that I had some guests with me. Our discourse was various, as at a convivial meeting, bringing nothing to a conclusion, but passing quickly from one subject to another. At length we agreed to read a treatise of Q. Sextius,—a great man, if you will take my judgment of him, and, deny it who will, a Stoic. What vigour, what spirit he possesses! such as you will in vain look for through the whole tribe of the philosophers, whose writings have indeed the lustre of a great name, but have no other vitality in them. They propose, they dispute, they cavil. They cannot put mind into others who have no mind themselves. When you read Sextius, you exclaim, he is all alive, vigorous, free, more than man; he sends me away convinced, and full of confidence. Whatever may have been the previous disposition of my mind; when I read him, I must tell you plainly I become a match for all vicissitudes, and am ready to cry out, why do you delay, fortune, come on, you see me prepared. I clothe myself with his mind; that mind which seeks for an occasion to have its strength tried, and to give proof of its virtue.

*Spumantemque dari pecora inter inertia votis  
Optat aprum, aut fulvum descendere monte leonem.*

I likewise seem to long for an occasion of triumph, and for the exercise of my patience. The excellence of Sextius consists in this, he sets before you the constituent greatness of a happy life, while at the same time he brings it within your reach. You are made to perceive that it is placed on high, but yet attainable by the willing mind. By the force of virtue itself you will be made at once to gaze upon it with admiration and with good hope.

As to myself, this contemplation of the beauty of wisdom engrosses much of my time, I turn towards it overwhelmed with wonder and delight, like that with which I survey the spectacle of this wide world, on which I often look with surprise, as if I were opening my eyes upon it for the first time, a fresh spectator of its glories. I pay homage to the discoveries of wisdom, and to the discoverers. I approach *them*, as if I were coming to take possession of an inheritance. I so appropriate their acquisitions, and the fruits of their industry that they seem to have been designed for me. But let us manage them with the thrift of a careful householder. Let us increase the store which has been thus transmitted to us. Let this inheritance pass improved to our posterity. Much work remains to be done upon these possessions, and will yet remain: nor to one born after a thousand generations will there be wanting an occasion of yet adding something to what has thus descended. But if all discoveries had been exhausted by the ancients; yet the application of their knowledge, the disposition of their discoveries would always be new.

Much has been done by those who have gone before us, but they have not finished the work. They are nevertheless well worthy of our veneration, and almost our worship. Why should I not preserve the statues and pictures of those great men, who have preceded us, as provocatives to imitation? why should I not celebrate their birth days? Why should I not always make honourable mention of them? The veneration which is due from me to my tutors, is due from me also to the preceptors of the whole of the species to which I belong; who have laid the foundation of so much good. If I meet a consul, or a prætor, I do whatever is usual in token

of respect and honour to his rank and station. I dismount from my horse, uncover my head, and make way for them. And shall I not bear in my bosom the same homage for each of the Cato's, for Lælius, for Socrates, and for Cleanthes? Truly, I do greatly honour them, and rise up at the bare mention of their names.

## TO LUCILIUS.

I OFTEN return from a ride in my chariot, as much fatigued as if I had walked as far as I had ridden. For it is an effort to me to be carried a long way. And I do not know whether this kind of labour is not the more fatiguing, because not according to the design of nature; which has given us feet to walk with, as well as eyes to see withal. Indulgence brings on debility: what we long are unwilling to do, we are at length unable to do. Still, however, it was necessary to give myself a little shaking either to discuss the phlegm which troubled me, or that, if from any cause my respiration was impeded, I might be relieved by this little agitation. And, indeed, it was of service to me. I therefore extended my drive; invited by the pleasantness of the shore that winds between Cumæ and the villa of Servilius Vatia, where the narrow pass has on one side the sea, and on the other the lake for its barrier. The ground had been rendered more than usually firm and solid by the late tempest; and by frequent overflowings had been made perfectly smooth and level.

According to my custom I began to look about me to see whether I could find anything which might afford me matter of profitable reflection. I directed my eyes towards the country house which sometime ago belonged to Vatia. In this residence lived that rich prætorian, who had signalized himself by nothing but his indolence. And for no other reason was he accounted a happy man: for as often as the friendship of Asinius Gallus, or the hatred and then the love of Sejanus (for it was alike dangerous to incur the hatred, or attract the friendship of that man,) had brought ruin upon any one, the

multitude cried out, O Vatia ! you alone know how to live. The truth is, he knew how to retreat from observation, but not how to live. He knew not the difference between a retired life and an idle one. I never passed by this villa without crying out, " Vatia hic situs est," Vatia lies here.

Philosophy, my Lucilius, is so sacred and venerable a thing, that to be merely like it, and not the thing itself is to falsify it. The vulgar think the man who has withdrawn from business, is without perplexity, self-satisfied, and living to himself. Neither of which is the predicament of any but the wise man. He, indeed, being a stranger to anxiety, knows how to live beneficially for himself, for he knows how truly to live. Whereas he who has run away from business and men, self-banished by the disappointment of his ambitious hopes ; who cannot without mortification see others more prosperous than himself ; who like a fearful and inert animal hides himself out of mere timidity ; does not live to his proper self, but to his appetites, his sleep, and his sensualities. He lives not to himself, who lives for none else. Still there is something so great in constancy, and perseverance in a purpose, that a determination of mind, even in the habit of idleness, has something imposing in it.

As touching the villa itself, I can say nothing with certainty about it. I am only acquainted with its front and exterior, which shews itself to the passers by. There are two grottos of laborious workmanship ; each of whose floors are of equal dimensions with the court yard. One of which does not admit the sun ; the other is exposed to it from its rising to its setting. A river which runs into the sea and the Acherusian lake, divides, like a canal, a grove of plane trees : and this river though frequently drawn, furnishes still an abundance of fish ; but the fishermen spare it when the sea is open to them. Every one catches the fish where he can best get at them, when the stormy state of the sea gives them a holiday. But what may be considered as a great advantage to this villa, is that it has Bains on the other side of the wall ; being so situated as to be exempt from its inconveniences, while it



partakes fully of its pleasures. These recommendations I know it merits;—and I believe it is a villa inhabitable throughout the whole year. It looks towards the west; and receives so as to deprive Baia of it.

Vatia, therefore, seems not injudiciously to have chosen this villa, in which to wear out the leisure of indolent old age. But in truth, place contributes little towards tranquillity. It is mind which controls all things. I have seen minds full of sorrow and trouble in a cheerful and pleasant villa; and in a solitary situation I have seen men fatigued with business. Wherefore there is no reason why you should think yourself so ill off, because you are not in Campania.

Send us your thoughts. One may hold conversation with absent friends. And, indeed, as often, and as long as we please. Nay, indeed, we enjoy this pleasure the more for being absent. The presence of a friend puts a degree of reserve upon us. And as when we are together we talk and walk at leisure; so when we part, we are apt to think no more about those we have just been with. We should, therefore, complain less of absence from each other than we do; for those who are thrown most together are often virtually absent. Look to the nights which are passed in necessary separation; then to the diversity of occupation; then to the distinct studies which engage us; and our frequent calls into the country; and it will be perceived that a journey to a distance does not rob us of much of each other's society. It is in the mind that we must keep the possession of our friend. This is never absent. It daily sees whom it pleases. Therefore study with me; sup with me; walk with me. We should live, indeed, within narrow bounds, if the door were shut upon our thoughts. I see you, my Lucilius, and hear you as plainly as ever. I am so much with you in thought, that I begin to doubt whether I shall feel it worth while to write you any more epistles, or not content myself rather with mere notes or billets.

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It would be great injustice to Seneca, to pass by his remarkable letter on the 'first cause.' It is not only a very valuable

compendium of doctrine, but exhibits so much judgment, and such advanced views respecting the origin of things, and the ends and designs of our being, that it may be doubted whether the reason of man apart from revelation has anything greater to shew in support of its pretensions. But we are not to forget, that in Seneca's day reason had borrowed largely from evangelical instruction; and that though still in captivity to the prejudices of sense, it had a field opened to it which carried its conceptions of divine things beyond the scope of philosophy, and the entanglements of the schools.

The ancient philosophers were so divided in their opinions concerning the creation, and the first principles and sources out of which all things were first formed, that Cicero, after considering them all, is brought to the conclusion that 'even a divine understanding would be at a loss which philosopher's opinion to choose. What seemed certain to one had scarcely the appearance of probability to another; and so equal were the reasons urged in support of contrary opinions, that we can neither know nor imagine whether this world was framed by divine counsel or not.' Everything but truth had its patron; and well might Pythagoras change the name of wise men into lovers of wisdom, as believing wisdom itself to be unattainable by the human capacity. Nor was it unworthy of Cicero, after an anxious search into the tenets of the various sects, to end in the conviction that 'we only follow probabilities, and are not able to go a step further.'

The juster notions to which Seneca had attained by participating, to some extent, in the general light which, in his time, had begun to diffuse itself through the whole range of human enquiry, make us compassionately regret his want of a correct acquaintance with the verities of the gospel, the vital knowledge of which might have given him a name to shine among the true lights of humanity. In the epistle to which we now direct the attention of the reader, the opinions of the greatest weight among the heathen philosophers, on the question of the first cause of all things are briefly set forth. He begins with the doctrine of the Stoics, who say there are two things from which all others are

derived; cause and matter: matter being inert and always continuing in the same state, unless put into motion; and cause, or reason, giving a certain form to matter. There must be something from which a thing is made, and something by which it is made. Thus a statue requires something to be acted upon, and an artist to give it form. And such is the condition of all things, say the Stoics, who allow but of one efficient cause—that which makes a thing what it is.

He next shews that Aristotle first divided cause into three heads:—the matter itself, without which nothing can be made, the maker, and the form. And then he superadds a fourth, which he calls design; being that which invites the artist, and which he constantly has in view in the prosecution of his work; and which he calls the cause, for which the thing is made.

In the metaphysics of Plato, the exemplar or idea is introduced as a cause, by observing which the artist models his material. The maker of the world has in his mind the exemplars of all things; and these are what Plato calls ideas, immortal, immutable, indefatigable. There are, therefore, according to Plato, five causes,—that *from* which a thing is; that *by* which it is; that whereby it is what it is; that according to which it is; and lastly, the end for which it is made. There is, therefore, the Great Maker, who is God; the matter; the form; the exemplar; and the end or purpose. Do you enquire what was the design of the Deity,—the exercise of his goodness, says Plato. He is good; and being so, he cannot envy any good to his creatures. He has, therefore, made the world in the best possible fashion.

After this summary view of these opinions of the ancients, Seneca thus proceeds:—

Now, Lucilius, give me your opinion on these points. Say who, in your judgment, seems to hold the most probable opinion; not who maintains the truth, but the opinion most like the truth. For to say who holds the truth, is as much as to say what is truth; which exceeds our capacity. For my own part, I think that this heap of causes put forth by

Plato and Aristotle, comprehends either too much or too little. For if that is to be reckoned a cause without which a thing cannot be made what it is, they have said too little, because they must then consider time a cause, seeing that without time nothing can be made. They must reckon 'place,' too, a cause: for if there were not a *somewhere* for a thing to be, it could not be. And they must reckon 'motion' a cause: for without this nothing could either be formed, or come to decay. Without motion no art or change could operate or pass upon anything.

But let us consider the proper subject of our enquiry,—one first and general cause. And this ought to be simple: for the element of matter is simple. Do we ask what is this 'cause.' It is operative reason; that is, God. So that in my reckoning there exist not several and particular causes, but one only, on which all depend, and that is the efficient cause. You will say that form is a cause: for this the artificer induces upon his work. It is part only, not cause. Neither is the exemplar or pattern a cause; but the necessary instrument of the cause: it is necessary to the artist as his chisel or his file. Without these art could not proceed. These, however, are neither parts nor causes. But you will say, the purpose or design of the artist, for which he enters upon his works, is surely a cause. Be it so; but then it is an adventitious, and not the efficient cause. Causes of this kind are innumerable. We are enquiring after one general cause. And in suggesting this the philosophers have not shewn their usual exactness. They have confounded the execution, with the cause of the work. Now, Lucilius, bring forward *your* opinion, or what is much easier to do in these cases, refuse to entertain the question, and leave us to ourselves, to contend with the subject as best we can.

But why, you will say, do you delight in spending your time in such enquiries, which clear the mind of no corrupt affection, nor expel from it any inordinate desire. The truth is, I exercise my thoughts on these topics to obtain rest to my mind. First I make myself the subject of my reflections,

and then the world around me. Nor is this time so lost to me as you imagine. For all these things, if not subdivided and frittered away, or dissipated in vain subtleties, exalt and invigorate the soul; which being pressed down by its heavy burthen, longs to be set at large; and return to the source from whence it came. For this body is the burthen and punishment of the soul. While this incumbrance oppresses it it is in bonds, till philosophy comes to its relief; commands it to breathe awhile in the survey of the wide spectacle of nature; and then calls it from earthly objects to divine things. This is the true liberty of the soul; this is her proper range. She escapes from her custody here, and draws refreshment from heaven. Just as artificers who are occupied in some minute work, which fatigues the eyes, in the scarcity of light which their shops afford, go forth into some open space dedicated to the recreation of the people, and there feast the eye with the clear light of day,—so the soul shut up in this gloomy domicile, seeks to be set free in open space, there to recreate itself in the contemplation of nature's magnificence.

The disciple of wisdom remains fastened to his bodily frame; yet as to the better part of him he may be said to be absent while he stretches his thoughts towards the higher objects. While in the flesh, as if bound by a soldier's oath, he looks upon life as his military service; and is so constituted as neither to love nor hate it. He endures his destiny here, knowing that greater and nobler things are in reserve for him.

Would you debar me from this general inspection into the material world, and confine me to view it only in parts and detail. Shall I not enquire into the origin of the universe who first reduced things into form; who first separated and disposed all things lying in a confused and inert mass of matter. Shall I not enquire who was the artificer of this our world? by what intelligence so great and disorderly a being was brought under law and discipline; who collected what was scattered, distinguished what lay in confusion, and gave expression and beauty to what was hid in a medley mass



deformity? Whence so great a light was spread around us; whether it was the same as fire, or something more luminous. Shall I not enquire after these things? Shall I remain forever ignorant of my own origin? Whether I am only once to open my eyes upon this world, or to have my being often renewed? Whither I shall go after this life? What mansion is to receive my soul, when freed from the laws of human servitude? Do you forbid me to hold converse with heaven? Do you wish me to live with my head bent towards the ground? No surely, I am greater, and born to greater things than to be the slave of my own body; which I regard in no other light than as a chain thrown round my native liberty. To fortune I offer my body, but there let her stop short; I suffer her not to wound me through it. All that in me is capable of being injured is my body. In this obnoxious tabernacle the soul dwells paramount and free. Never shall this flesh of mine make a coward of me, or induce me to adopt any art or pretence unbecoming a good man; never will I be guilty of falsehood from homage to this little perishable carcass. I can when I please dissolve partnership with it: and while our union subsists it shall not be upon equal terms. The soul shall possess the entire dominion. In her contempt of the body consists her true liberty.

But to return to the theme with which I set out. The search into the mysteries of nature favours much this moral liberty, of which I have just been speaking. Truly all things consist of God and matter. God governs all things, which are gathered round him as their great disposer and director: but a far more potent and precious thing surely is He who makes,—which is God, than the subject of his workmanship,—which is matter. What matter is to him, the body is to us. Let then the baser things be subject to the better. Let us be strong against adverse fortune; and rise above the dread of external injuries, or chains, or poverty; and consider death itself as only the termination of one state of being, or the transit to another. I fear not to be no more, since that is only the same as not to have begun to be. Nor

do I dread a transit, as wherever I go I hope to be in less narrow bounds than I am in my present state.

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The doctrine of Aristotle, and of the greater number of ancient philosophers, was the eternal existence of matter. They considered it impossible to admit of the making of any thing out of nothing; and, consequently, regarded matter as co-eternal with the eternal mind. And though it clearly appears from the letter just produced, that the views of Seneca concerning the first great efficient cause were, by his partial acquaintance with revealed truth, raised a little above the more perplexed systems of heathen theology, he was yet unable to conceive or admit the creation of the world but as the product of two co-eternal subsistences—God and matter. Thus Seneca fell lamentably short of the incomprehensible greatness of the true God as the originating cause of all things, speaking the universe into existence by his simple decree.\* His mind could not disengage itself from the shackles of sense, so as to mount in its conceptions to Him who brought essence out of nonentity by his mere volition; but that he entertained exalted notions of the Divine attributes is abundantly shewn in the above beautiful epistle. One cannot but perceive, however, that these apprehensions of the Divine perfections, though professed by him to have been drawn from the stores of ancient philosophy, did, in truth, come to him collaterally and consequentially from the christian revelation, which had in his time begun to diffuse itself over the whole intellectual world. Philosophy was trimming its lamp afresh, and lighting it at the fire of the sanctuary. Even in Seneca's day it had become the practice of the heathen philosophers and sophists, especially of those who copied from the Platonic model, to blend the lessons of inspired teachers

\* He commanded, and they were created. Ps. cxlviii. 5. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Ps. xxxiii. 6.

with the dogmas of man's inventions, and to set up their new systems thus artfully compiled, and enriched with the spoils of christianity, in opposition to that blessed dispensation itself.

While some were bending christianity into subserviency to antecedent error, others, yielding to irresistible evidence, embraced the faith of the gospel, but yet retained their attachment to their mystic theology, so agreeable to the boastful pretensions of human wisdom, thus turning away from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus, and disfiguring their christian belief with a gross admixture of earth-born conceits. The speculations of Plato comprise the loftiest conceptions of Deity to be found in the compass of ancient philosophy; but even in the system of that great man and his followers, the executive power and efficacious will of the Almighty was limited to act upon certain beings or essences of eternal necessity—certain relations ever necessarily existing in the nature of things, to which even the power of God was restrained in its operations. In the highest conceptions to which the mind of man, untaught or partially informed by revelation, could ever attain, something was still supposed to be necessary and eternal besides God: and whether we turn to the dogmas of the *Timæus*, where Plato involves himself in his infinite, immaterial, immutable, and eternal essences or ideas; or to that philosopher's archetypal models of the works of God in the divine mind, of physical or metaphysical entity; or to the antecedent or co-eternal existence of matter, how do all these phantasies retire confounded before that mighty record of the world's beginning given us by the mouth of the prophet from God's own dictation, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' Here, in solitary grandeur, came forth to view the great majestic infinite first cause, of which the mind of all the philosophers were so long in search, and which no travail of human thought was able to discover.

Amidst the various views prevailing among those ancient sects, there was no repose, no central stay, no point of union,

that held the several classes of dogmatists together in their respective schools, no conformity resting on any commonly acknowledged principle: it was all vacillation, discordance, and tendency to division and subdivision. Sometimes in the prosecution of their vagrant reveries, they seemed to expatiate near the confines of truth, but they could never settle in consistency at any point, or arrive at any just comprehension of what man is, or what God requires. If sometimes they seemed to admit the creation of matter by the sole efficiency of the one Great Cause,<sup>4</sup> at other times they reasoned on a contrary supposition. If Plato and his followers renounced the eternity of visible and tangible matter, they still clung to the hypothesis of a world of incorporeal and ideal entities, which they placed in co-eternity with God, or made the partners or constituents of the Divine mind; and sometimes even matter itself was deified, or endued with soul and intelligence.

Though the heathen Platonists did generally acknowledge

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, in the first book of his *Metaphysics*, c. ii. thus writes, ὁ τε γὰρ θεὸς δοκεῖ το αἰὶον παντὶ εἶναι καὶ ἀρχὴ τις. a plain contradiction of his opinions given elsewhere. The statement of Hesiod has been much discussed:

Ἦτοι μὲν πρῶτιστ' αἶα καὶ χάος γένετ'. *Θεογ.* l. 115.

It has been taken by some as a ground for assuming that it was the poet's opinion that the world was created out of nothing, which is to understand *γένετο* in the sense of *γεννηθῆναι*. If it be rendered by *factum est*, or *genitum est*, then the question arises a quo? *Nihil enim fit sine factore*. Diogenes Laertius, when giving the reason why Epicurus betook himself to the study of philosophy, says that Apollodorus the epicurean, in his *Life of Epicurus*, relates that he left the sophists and grammarians, and applied himself to philosophy, because the sophists and grammarians could not answer his enquiry, what was the origin of the chaos of Hesiod. And the same thing is related by Sext. *Empir. adv. Mathematicos*, who says that Epicurus, when very young, asked a grammarian who was reading to him the said passage in Hesiod, from what was chaos derived, if it had a beginning; to which question the answer given was this—that it was not the office of the grammarian to teach such things, but of the philosopher; and, accordingly, Epicurus went to the philosophers for the explanation of the difficulty. But his application did not seem to be attended with better success.

the necessarily self-existent Being, the Maker of all things, by a strange violence of metaphysical reasoning, they sometimes asserted matter, soul, and the substance of all things to be eternal, while at the same time they represented them as having only a derivative existence, and to have received that existence from God; being essentially dependent upon Him, as the sun's radiance is upon the sun itself.<sup>d</sup> The simple, unqualified proposition on which Moses bases his great authentic record was never substantially set forth in the school of gentile philosophy.

The letter of Seneca on the value of time is full of spirit and point.

## TO LUCILIUS.

Stick up to your resolutions, my dear Lucilius.<sup>e</sup> Assert your right to yourself and to your time; and that which you have hitherto been used to see taken or stolen from you, or slip away of itself, treasure up and preserve. Be persuaded of the certainty of what I say. One portion of our time is snatched from us, another is silently withdrawn, and another goes away of itself. But the most disgraceful loss is that which happens from our own neglect. If you consider the object, you will perceive that part of our existence is wasted in doing what is wrong, part in doing nothing, and part in doing what does not belong to the business before us. Can you name the man who puts the true value upon time? who regards the passing day as he ought? who feels the solemn

<sup>d</sup> Proclus, the great maintainer of the eternity of the world and of souls, expressly declares that *παρα ψυχῇ γίνεσθαι ἐπὶ τοῦ θίου*. See Cudw. ed. Syst. b. i. c. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Seneca's letters appear to be all addressed to Lucilius; concerning whom little we know comes to us through these same letters. He appears to have been a person of mean extraction, and a little younger than Seneca. He became a Roman knight, and held a responsible charge in Sicily. He was a man of taste and talent, and in great esteem for his social virtues.



truth—that he is dying daily? In this we deceive ourselves when we look to death as altogether a future event. It is a process which is always going on, and has been in part dispatched. The by-gone period of our existence is already in the grasp and tenure of death. Do, then, my dear friend, that which it is my object in this letter to persuade you to do—lay fast hold on the hours as they pass, and make the most of them. Make to-day your own, that you may the less depend upon to-morrow. While we are procrastinating time will not stop for us, but runs by us. We can call nothing of all things of this world our own but time. But it is a property of a fugitive and lubricious nature, from which whosoever is so minded can drive us from the possession. Such is the folly of mortals that they consider themselves obliged by gifts of the most worthless description, while no one thinks he owes us anything who borrows from us our time; whereas in truth this is a loan which even gratitude cannot repay.

Let me persuade you to begin in good time to be thrifty of your opportunities: for according to the wise old adage, it is late to begin to save when we are almost at the bottom—not only is that which is at the bottom the least, but it is also the worst.

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The way to read with real intellectual profit is a point of instruction not unworthy of the attention of Seneca. He passes in the following letter some very just censures on that roving habit of study which too commonly accompanies the ambitious pursuit of knowledge. In such cases a ready access to libraries is often a real disadvantage. The mind is apt to be dissipated and embarrassed by the concourse of opportunities and facilities: in the endeavour to use these all at once, they are made so to crowd the path of the student, as to prevent any forward movement of the understanding—*ipsa sibi officit copia. Arma inermem reddunt*. The next letter is, therefore, worthy of being recommended to the attentive pe-

qual of every young candidate for academical honours, or for liberal literary distinction.<sup>a</sup>

## TO LUCILIUS.

From the letters you write to me and from other testimonies, I am full of hope concerning you. You do not run from one thing to another, nor keep your mind in an unquiet and migratory state by perpetually changing the objects of your enquiry. This changeableness is the restless and feverish disease of the distempered mind. I consider it a principal evidence of a sound and well conditioned intellect, to be capable of standing still, and abiding with itself. My advice to you is, to take care that the perusal of many authors, and many subjects, do not give a character of vagrancy, and instability to the course of your application. It is important to remain long enough in converse with the particular productions of certain good writers, to receive from them the nutriment they are capable of imparting, if you wish to extract any thing which may settle permanently in your own mind. He that is every where, is really no where. It is the fate of those who pass their lives in moving about from place to place, to experience hospitalities, indeed, but to form no friendships; and much like this is the case of those who never so apply themselves to the study of an author, as to become familiar with his genius, but aim at acquainting themselves with every thing that comes in their way as they hasten on in their rapid career. It is in vain that food is taken into the stomach, if it remains not there long enough to be digested.

<sup>a</sup> Lord Shaftesbury observes that it is not right to call a man well read who reads many authors, since he must of necessity have more ill models than good: and be more stuffed with bombast, ill fancy, and wry thought, than filled with solid sense and just imagination. *Charact.* vi. 142. And Sir W. Temple apprehends from it "the lessening of the force and growth of a man's own genius. The weight and number of so many thoughts of other men may suppress one's own, or hinder the motion or agitation of them, from which all invention arises." *Essay on Learning.*

Nothing is so unfavourable to convalescence, as a perpetual change of remedies ; and if a wound is healed with a variety of dressings and ointments, the process of healing is sure to be interrupted and retarded. So neither will a plant flourish that is often removed. Nothing useful is of benefit to us if applied in this hasty and transitory way : and it is for the same reason that a multitude of books distracts the mind, by inducing us to hurry from one to the other, so as to become familiar with none. When you cannot read all you have, it is enough to have what you *can* read, without more. But, perhaps, you will say, I like now to turn over this book, and then another. But remember, a pampered stomach, by becoming fastidious, loses its relish altogether, and that what turns to corruption can never afford nourishment. Confine your reading, therefore, to approved works, and if at any time you are induced to seek a short entertainment from others, come back I pray you to these again. Resort to those compositions which will help you to bear poverty and death, and other calamities ; and after casting your eye over many, select one for the day which you may be capable of digesting. This is what I do myself. From the many that I turn over I fix upon some one. This is what I felt in with to-day, I found it in Epicurus. You are to know that I am accustomed sometimes to steal into the enemy's camp, not as a deserter, but as a spy. *Honesta, inquit, res est læta paupertas.* Cheerful poverty is an honourable thing ; indeed, poverty is no longer poverty when it is cheerfully endured. To be content with poverty is in effect to be rich. The poor man is not he who has little, but he that covets more than he has. What does it signify, how much a man has in his coffers, or in his granaries, how he fares, or what usurious bargains he makes if he sighs after the possessions of another ; if he overlooks what he possesses, in thinking of what is to be acquired. What boundary then, you will ask, ought we to put upon our accumulations ? Two. The first, to have what is necessary the second, what is enough.

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I will only extract a part of another letter of this great man, to show how near his aspirations came to the highest standard, in what respects the soul and its capacities. The classical reader will do well to turn to the original letter numbered cii, where he will find the noble ideas of Seneca expressed in words as far as par with his ideas in force and dignity.

## TO LUCILIUS.

A GREAT and generous thing is the soul of man; reaching to the limits of a common intelligence with the Deity Himself: for it has no locality, no country in this lower world: neither Athens nor Alexandria, nor if there be any other more peopled, of larger extent. She embraces the universe in her circuit; all this vault above us encompassing the wide creation of lands and waters, and the region of the air which divides and yet unites the habitations of God and man, and within which so many inferior divinities fulfil their several ministrations. Nor proudly, does the soul suffer herself to be bounded by any mod of time. All years, she says, are mine. No age is closed against the entrance of great spirits, no time is impervious to thought. When the day shall come which is to separate this compound of divine and human, I shall leave this body where I found it; and return to God: not that I am altogether absent from him now: but I am detained by this heavy earthly log. This detention in mortal life is but the prelude to a better and more enduring life. As our mother's womb holds us in a nine months' confinement, preparing us not for a continuance there, but for that place into which we are designed to emerge, when fit to breathe the vital air, and bear the open element, so in that space of time which reaches from infancy to age, we are matured for another birth: a fresh beginning, another state of things awaits us: we must pass through an interval of preparation before we can hope for heaven. Look forward then without dismay to that determined hour, which is the last to the body, but not to the soul. What things lie spread around you, regard them as the furniture of an inn.

We must pass on in our journey. Nature casts us out of the world, as she once did cast us into it; and so we come and go: we can carry no more out of it than we brought into it. And of that which thou didst bring into this existence, a large part must be laid down on your departure. You must be stripped of this skin, which will be your last only covering. This flesh, and this circulating blood that pervaded your system will be withdrawn from you; your bones and nerves, the base and support of the less solid parts, will all be carried off. But that day which you now dread as the last of your existence, will be truly the birth-day of eternity. Be content then to lay your burthen down. Why are you reluctant? as though you had not before come out from a body when you came from the womb of your mother. Are you still reluctant? it was not without a great effort that you were thrown upon this world; you came weeping into it; it was the lot of your nativity to weep; it had its excuse then. You came hither in utter ignorance and inexperience; and when sent forth from the warm receptacle and shelter of the maternal covering, the free air blew fresh upon you; and you were yet so tender as to be unable to bear the touch of the hard hand; then in your ignorance of every thing, you were confounded by the multitude of unknown objects which surrounded you. But now to be separated from that to which you were before joined is no novelty. Dismiss, therefore, without uneasiness, these members which are no necessary part of you; this body which has so long been your lodging. Let it be divided, destroyed, abolished. Why does the thought of this make you sad? it is the common destiny: so what envelopes the new born infant perishes. Why love you so these things, as if they were your own? they are only your outward covering. The day will come which shall take this covering from you, and make you come forth from your present unclean quarters. Even now take your flight from them as much as you can, estranged even from those things which seem most necessary to you; fix your thoughts upon something loftier and nobler. At some time or other, the secrets



Nature will be revealed to you; this darkness shall be dispelled, and light shall break in upon you on every side. Imagine with yourself how great will be that effulgence, when so many stars intermingle their glorious beams; no shadow shall cross that pure serene; on every side the heaven shall be equally resplendent. Day and night are the changes only of this lower element. Then you will say, you have lived in darkness, when whole in yourself, you shall see around you total brightness; which now you obscurely glance upon through the narrow vision of your mortal eyes; and yet are filled with admiration at the distant sight. What then will be the effect of that divine illumination, when you shall see it in its own place? Such a thought will not allow any thing sordid to settle in your mind; nothing base, nothing ungente. It tells us that the Gods are the witnesses of every thing; it commands us to seek their approval, to prepare ourselves for communion with them, and to keep eternity in view; by dwelling upon which, in our thoughts, we are raised above the dread of armies; no trumpet's sound can dismay us; no threats alarm us. What should he fear, with whom death is an object of joyful expectation? When sometimes even he that considers that the soul only lives while imprisoned in this body, and that at its departure hence it is dissipated and dissolved, yet strives by his actions, while living, to make his life a benefit to the world after his death. Although he is himself removed out of sight, his virtue and the honour he has reflected on his family is often and long remembered. Think, how profitable to the world are good examples, and you will acknowledge that the memory of great and good men is hardly less serviceable than their presence among us.

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With this extraordinary letter we take leave of Seneca; and if its matter and character have left on the reader's mind the same impression which it has left on our own, the attainments and deficiencies of that great man will never recur to us without exciting emotions of admiration and pity. So

very near "the fountain of the water of life," and yet perishing with thirst; moving "in the slippery ways of darkness" so near the walls of that seraphic city "which needeth neither sun nor moon, having the glory of God to lighten it."

Notwithstanding the noble thoughts contained in his epistle, it is evident that the notions of Seneca concerning the soul's immortality were in a very unsettled state; pregnant neither with strong assurance nor rational hope. His sentiments, indeed, are gloomily grand, but they shew more of a gilded despondency than of a resigned spirit, or of a trusting patience. Much of what he says is summed up with beautiful brevity in the twelfth chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes:—"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God, who gave it." And in the fifth chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians, the soul's spiritual longing to escape from the prison of the body is expressed in words which, while they are recognised only in the bosom of the real Christian, throw into the shade the bright but ambiguous aspect of Seneca's philosophy. "We are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; (for we walk by faith, not by sight;) we are confident, I say, and willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord; wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

Yet, who can contemplate the anxiety of this great Stoic concerning the awful futurity that awaits the soul of man, without respect for the character of his mind; or without a deep sense of shame at the comparative indifference with which so many nominal Christians seek behind the screen of this earth and its vanities, to shut out the prospect of the eternal world and its verities. "It is in vain," says Pascal, "for men to turn aside their thoughts from this eternity which awaits them, as if they were able to destroy it by not thinking of it. It exists in spite of them, nay, it approaches; and death which will discover it, must in a short time infallibly reduce them to the dreadful alternative of being for ever nothing, or for ever miserable."

The lesson we may learn by looking into the philosophy of these magnanimous men of the Stoic school, and contrasting their errors with the opposite dogmas of the Epicurean sects, and again by contemplating the floating opinions which fill the dark interval between these extremes, is very important. We see in these contrarieties the result of the sincere, but failing efforts of human weakness when left to itself,—the tendencies of a state of being wherein greatness and meanness exist in marvellous concord,—the proofs of a portentous change and disfigurement which pervade both the moral and natural world,—the lineaments of that likeness, in which man was created, blended with the marks of that forfeiture and degradation which ensued upon the first transgression. These contrarieties in his character, these efforts to soar to giddy heights of a self-trusting confidence on the one hand, and this alacrity in sinking into infidel sensuality on the other, we trace the revolution to which our species has been subjected. It is this confusion of contrarieties which laid the foundation, and supplied the materials of all those bewildering disputations which have vainly agitated whole centuries of the world's early history. The problem of original sin, attainting all succeeding generations, how perplexing, how mysterious! how opposed to our habitual notions of justice! how far sequestered among the deep things of God! This is a mystery which has been succeeded by that greater mystery made known to us by the testimony of God's word; this waiting to be opened by "the keys of the kingdom" those keys which can alone unlock the portals of grace and mercy—mystery upon mystery, together involving the mighty dispensation of the curse, the cross, and the reconciliation! The mystery of our fall then is great indeed, and the mystery of the means provided for our restoration is greater still, but without these mysteries, man would be to himself the greatest mystery of all, made up as he is of moral materials so opposed to their natures and tendencies; indicating at once the amount of the loss and the magnitude of the ruin. Whence came these contrarieties which exalted the Stoic, and made sense of the concupiscence the law of the Epicurean? Is not the

answer contained in the mystery which tells us of the image of God, once ours, but whereof only now the faint traces remain to make the sinfulness of sin more sinful, and to force our consciences to testify more loudly against us.

Seneca having been long in favour at the court of Nero, was an object of jealousy and suspicion, and of course the subject of much misrepresentation. But if due respect is had to his salutary influence on the conduct of his imperial pupil during the first four years of his reign; the weight of his character among his friends and associates; his instructive writings and discourses; the dignity of his political life; and the calm heroism of his magnanimous end, one cannot but conclude that there was in all this a strength of testimony on his side not to be overcome but by proofs much more explicit, and authorities much more decisive than those by which the assaults upon his memory are supported. During the reign of the first successors of Augustus, every demonstration on the side of virtue was as suspected as it was singular. The state of morals and manners was so utterly depraved that there seemed to have been something almost mysterious in the principle which held together the elements of civil union, and the most ordinary relations of mutual dependence. It may be, that much of this secret leaven, and conservative basis was attributable to the Pythagorean and Stoic principles which had penetrated the mass. Some qualities thus derived served, probably, to maintain the silent recognition of the necessity of a certain degree of order and restraint, and to keep the walks of men from becoming a forest for the savage passions to range in with unbounded license, and unmitigated fury.

To find a Seneca in the midst of such universal degeneracy and corruption, may reasonably excite surprise, but it would have been more extraordinary if a Seneca had in such times escaped the malice of slanderous tongues. Eminent virtue was treason in the reign of Nero. And a pretext was only wanting to bring Seneca under this charge. It was matter of easy contrivance. Informers soon implicated him in the conspiracy of Piso. The messenger of death found him at his suburban villa, with his wife Paulina, and two of his



friends at supper. A few questions being asked and answered relative to the affair of Piso, enough appeared to satisfy the easy exigence of criminal justice, and to vindicate imperial vengeance. The tribune on his return was asked if Seneca was prepared to be his own executioner. "He shewed," said he, "neither sign of fear, nor dejection of countenance, when the proposal was made to him." It was enough, and the tribune was ordered to carry to him the emperor's decree.

This tribune had from a conspirator become informer and public accuser, and being desirous of avoiding a meeting with Seneca, sent to him a centurion with the mandate; Seneca received it without fear or concern, and having been denied a tablet for his testament, in which he had hoped to mark his gratitude to his friends, contented himself with bequeathing to them in words the great example of his life: and after mildly reproving them for not restraining their grief, and repressing their tears, prepared himself manfully for death. He endeavoured to cheer his wife Paulina; but on her declaring her determination to accompany him in this last passage, he thus addressed her: "I have pointed out to you the means of making your life easy; but as you prefer the glory of a voluntary death, I will not envy you the privilege of becoming so bright an example. To meet our fate with courage and constancy is equally in the power of us both; but yours must be considered as the more illustrious death."

The veins of Seneca and Paulina were then opened by themselves; but the husband's torments being much aggravated by the state of his body, to spare his wife the pain of witnessing his agony he persuaded her to permit herself to be taken to another apartment. He was afraid also that with such a spectacle before her, her fortitude might be overcome. After the loss of much blood, the arms of the wife were bandaged by the emperor's command, and she was made to live for some time, carrying in her pallid countenance and languid body the traces of the suffering she had undergone.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Tacitus adds, "Ut est vulgus ad deteriora promptum, non defuere qui crederent, donec implacabilem Neronem tinuerit, famam sociate cum marito



The departure of Seneca was very lingering. The effusion of blood was slow and reluctant from his attenuated body. Warm water was used for promoting the depletion; but neither that nor a poisonous draught<sup>10</sup> which was swallowed by him produced the desired effect, till at length, he was suffocated in the vapours of the bath, after delivering his dying instructions to those around him with his usual eloquence.

It is hardly possible to dwell upon these last moments of Seneca without noticing the parallel case of the dying Socrates. The picture drawn by Plato is, indeed, rather softer and more shaded. The features of the great Athenian sage have rather a more cordial expression: but in the exhibition of mental composure, and courage above nature and humanity, Seneca is in no degree his inferior. The life of the condemned Socrates was to end with the setting sun. The two great luminaries were to go down together. And the sun was now on the verge of its departure. Socrates, after dismissing his wife and children with his last instructions, had retired to an inner apartment, whence, after having washed himself, he came out to his friends, and sat down, speaking but little. Then came the servant of the eleven, and standing near him, thus addressed him, "I have noticed in you, Socrates, what I have witnessed in no others in your circumstances. When by the command of the magistrates I have announced to *them* the necessity of their drinking poison, they have loaded me with execrations. But you, as in other instances, so especially in the present juncture, I have found to be the most candid, mild, and altogether the best of those who have ever been brought to this prison. You give me the comfortable assurance, that with whatever displeasure you regard those whom I obey, you look upon me

moris petivisse; deinde oblata mitiore spe, blandimentis vitæ evictum.  
Tacit. Ann. lib. xv. s. 64.

<sup>10</sup> Seneca, interim, durante tractu, et lentitudine mortis, Statium Annaeum diu sibi amicitiae fide et arte medicinae probatum orat, provisum pridem venenum quo damnati publico Atheniensium judicio exuquerentur, promeret allatumque hausit frustra; frigidus jam artus, et cluso corpore adversum viri venem. Tacit. Ann. lib. xv. s. 64.

with none. Now, therefore, farewell, and endeavour to bear with all the fortitude you are master of, your unavoidable fate. To this Socrates answered, looking kindly upon him, farewell, we shall do as you say. And then turning to us he said, How gentle and courteous is this man. He has come to me often, and sometimes conversed with me. He is really the kindest of men. And now how benevolently he weeps for me. But let us do what he bids us. And let some one bring hither the poison if it is prepared; and if not, let it be prepared. Here Crito interposed, "But, Socrates, I do not think the sun has sunk behind the hills, nor is yet set. I have known others to take the poison very late, after the necessity for so doing has been announced to them, therefore do not hasten; there is time yet." "Those to whom you allude," said Socrates, "have acted rightly, (for they may think that they gain something by thus acting,) and I shall act as rightly in not copying them. For I do not think it will be my advantage to me to delay drinking the poison. Come then, do what is required of thee." Hearing this, Crito added to the servant standing by, who went out and returned bringing with him the person who was to administer the poison, who bore it in a cup. "Come, my good friend," said Socrates, "you are skilled in these matters, tell me what to do." "Nothing more," said he, "than when you have drunk, walk till you are sensible of a heaviness in your lower limbs; and then lie down," and so saying, he held out the chalice to Socrates, who received it cheerfully, neither trembling, nor changing colour; but surveying the man, as he was about to do, with a steady and somewhat stern aspect, (*ταυροειδῶς*), "What say you," said he, "as to this cup, shall I make from it a libation, or not?" To which the man replied, "I have only mixed what is enough for you to drink." "I understand," said Socrates, "but certainly to pray to the gods that my passage may be prosperous, is both lawful and decent; I do, therefore, pray that so it may be." Having said this, he with complacency and alacrity drank the whole of the poison. This last act was followed by the tears and lamentations of the persons present; till they were reproved by Socrates

for their weakness. "I have heard," said he, "that it is desirable to go out of this life amidst felicitations and blessings; therefore, be tranquil, I beseech you, and of good courage." We blushed when we heard this, and left off weeping. After he had walked about a little, he said his legs grew weary and heavy, and laid himself down on his back, as he had been told to do. At that instant the man who gave him the draught, touched him, and looked at his feet and legs; and after pressing them asked him if he felt anything. He said he did not. Then ascending gradually with his pressures, he shewed him to us cold and stiff. Socrates also felt his own person, observing that when the poison reached his heart he should die. Then uncovering himself, he said, (and they were his last words,) "we owe a cock to Esculapius. Pay this debt, neglect it not." This Crito promised to do, and asked him if he had any other wish, to which he answered nothing. His countenance was fixed,—and Crito observing this, composed his mouth and eyes.

So perished all that could perish of those illustrious men; the one, the founder, the other, the follower of a discipline differing in mode, but similar in motive and principle, and framed alike for forcibly raising the mind to the loftiest pitch to which the rewards of present distinction and admiration, the dream of a never-dying renown, the triumph of conscious superiority, the pride of constancy, and the excitement of universal expectation could exalt it among men. What Socrates intended by his dying request to his friend to offer a cock to Esculapius, is variously conjectured. Some have thought him serious in this last act of his life; others have considered it as an ironical expression of his contempt of the vulgar worship of his country: others have thought that by this tribute to the god of the healing art he obscurely intimated that death was to him the physician that cured all the ills of this life.<sup>11</sup> If it proceeded from superstition (*δεισιδαι-*

<sup>11</sup> See the Socratic argument against the fear of death, *οὐκ ἔστι μὴδὲν αἰσθητὸν ὅτι τίς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ πόντος. ποιεῖται τις καθ' ἑαυτὸν μὴδ' οὐκ ἔστι μὴδὲν ἄρα. θάνατος.*

onia) from which on other grounds he has been judged not to be wholly free,<sup>12</sup> he surely would not merit a place among philosophers above the rank of the great Roman<sup>13</sup> whose letters have been the subject of this chapter.

οὐκ ἐπιδόξας αὐτὴν τὸ θάνατον. And again, εἰ οὐκ τοιοῦτος ὁ θάνατος ἐστὶ, ὅπως ἔγωγε λίγω Ἀπολ. Σωκρ. 16.

<sup>12</sup> Socratem per canem, et nonnunquam etiam per anserem et platannum morte solum passim tradunt veteres. Cur vero id ageret, inter ipsos æque non convenit, serio hoc alii factum, et ex *δυσειδαιμονία*, profectum existimant: *de* vero ironiæ Socraticæ numinumque vulgo receptorum contemptui tribuunt. Conf. Liban. in Apol. Socr. 663. 666. Ἀπολ. Σωκρ. ζ. νη τὸν κύνα and Φαιδ. ς. ο ἑκαστοῦ δαιμον et seq.

<sup>13</sup> Seneca was the ornament of the latter school of the Stoic philosophy—an improvement upon the more ancient form, which carried its tenets often to a wild and paradoxical extremity. The first platform of their system appears to have been laid by the Cynics, whose characteristic notions and habits were preposterous, arrogant, and grossly licentious. The sect of the Stoics after a period of declension was revived in a meliorated form in the reigns of the first emperors of Rome, after the blessed epoch of the Christian revelation. “*Haud pauca Christianorum,*” says Brucker, “*præcepta imitati sunt, ita tamen, ut mutato sensu salva maneret Stoici Systematis integritas.*” Inst. Hist. Ph. Per. ii. S. vii. The signal fortitude and magnanimity of Cæcilia Pætus, Thraseus, and Helvetius, and of their wives, the two Arrias, and Fannia, added great lustre to the sect; which maintained its credit until it was absorbed in a medicated and eclectic philosophy, in which there was a confused mixture of the Stoic, Platonic, Peripatetic, and other systems. After two centuries from the Nativity of our Lord, there seems to have remained no distinct school of professors or dogmatists of this sect. The school of the Stoics which flourished in Imperial Rome, began with Athenodorus Tursensis, under Augustus Cæsar, and appears to have reached its acme in the person of M. Aur. Antoninus: “*et in hoc quidem maximo viro,*” says Brucker, “*Stoicæ Sectæ vigor emarcuit.*” The interval was graced by Musonius, Chæremon, Seneca, Dio Prusæensis, called Chrysostomus on account of his eloquence, Euphrates, Epictetus, and Sextus.

## CHAPTER XV.

## LETTERS OF THE YOUNGER PLINY.

THE letters of the younger Pliny savour of a period in which the Roman state was much altered from its condition in the days of Cicero. He held the same offices as Cicero, and a similar provincial command, but he held them under a master to whom he was expected to account for all the particulars of his public conduct. His opinions and actions were all under a superintendence, that kept the germs of any great qualities, if there existed any in his mind, from fully disclosing themselves. His public attainments seem to have been either cramped or naturally diminutive in comparison with those of the great man whom he professedly imitated;—one, whom in Rome, Rome regarded as her patriot and preserver, and who in exile or in foreign command carried with him the genius of Rome wherever he went.

The letters of Pliny are, however, very full of good sense and entertainment; and of a more domestic character than either those of Cicero or Seneca. They shew the decisive marks of the gentleman and the scholar, and deserve great respect for their polished and social urbanity. They are replete with the topics and interests of busy and contemplative life; but they contain little to illustrate the charm imparted to letters by a free and unfettered choice of familiar words and imagery controlled only by the discipline of taste, the restraints of principle, and the awe of public opinion.

We may infer from his complying with the request of a friend to make a careful selection of his letters, (from copies it is to be presumed preserved by himself,) that they were, for the most part, written to be read by others besides those to whom they were addressed. That he considered letter-writing a branch of composition to be specially cultivated



appears by his letter to Priscus, in which, where he solicits the patronage of that military commander for his friend, he mentions among the accomplishments of that friend, the very elegant style of his epistles, "*Epistolas quidem scribit, ut ausas ipsas latine loqui credas.*"

He observes, in writing to Ferox, that the composition of his letters was opposed to the representation he had given of himself as having discontinued his studies, since they displayed an elegance in their style and structure, which must have been the result of continued application, unless he could boast of the peculiar privilege of being able to express himself in so perfect a manner, without any mental effort or preparation. And in another letter to a friend, he declares in strong terms his admiration of the great elegance with which his letters were composed.

There is a justness of moral taste and feeling in the letter which I shall first select as a specimen of Pliny's manner, with which the reader, if haply one of those for whose perusal this work was designed, is likely to be well pleased. It is calculated to bring him at once into familiarity, I had almost said into correspondence with the letter-writer.

#### TO MINUTIUS FUNDANUS.

THE manner of passing one's time at Rome is generally such that it is curious to observe how rationally any single day may seem to be employed, when, if we cast our view back over many days together, we shall find no reason to be satisfied. Ask any one, what have you been doing to-day? He will say, perhaps, I have been at the ceremony of taking on the toga virilis. I have been at a wedding or espousals. A friend requested my signature to his will, or another called me to a consultation. These things on the day in which you are doing them seem very necessary: yet the same things appear very trifling when we look back and take a collective view of what we have been daily transacting. Then the general thought occurs, how many days have I consumed on things of no value. This is a reflection which frequently

crosses my mind, after a studious interval passed at my Laurentine villa; or even when I have been there for the improvement of my health, for the mind depends much upon the support it receives from the animal frame. Here I neither hear nor utter anything of which I have reason to repent. No one entertains me here with the whispers of calumny. Here I censure none, unless it be myself, indeed, when I am dissatisfied with what I write. Here neither hope nor fear agitates my mind, and no rumours reach me to trouble my repose. I converse only with myself and my books. O this peaceful life, so well ordered, and so sincere! O this sweet and honourable repose! having, in my opinion, something in it more graceful and pleasing than almost any active employment. O this sea, this shore, this true retirement, this scene so suited to contemplation and the muse! Of how many new thoughts art thou the inventor and inspirer! Leave then, my friend, I beseech you, as soon as you can, the noise, inanity, and frivolous pursuits of the city, and devote yourself to study and retirement. It is better as our friend Attilius used sensibly and wittily to say, "to be wholly unemployed than to be actively idle."

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The character drawn in the next letter is interesting and affecting;—interesting as exhibiting an amiable portrait of a heathen gentleman; and affecting as shewing the gloomy barrier which stopped the procedure of the finest minds, at a point so far below their capacity of expansion, had Christianity been their guide and conductor.

TO CATILIUS SEVERUS.

I HAVE been long detained in Rome, in a state of the greatest anxiety. The long and obstinate illness of Aristo, for whom I entertain the highest admiration and affection, troubles and afflicts me. There is no one whom I can name, in whom dignity, virtue, and learning are more conspicuous. How great is his skill in the laws, both civil and political, of his

country! how deep is his acquaintance with its events, its characters, and its antiquities. There is nothing you would wish to learn that he is not qualified to teach. To me he is a treasury to which I resort when I want information on any subject of abstruse enquiry. What integrity and weight there is in all he utters! How circumspect and graceful is his modest reserve in delivering himself. Though he sees in a moment the very point at issue, yet before he pronounces his opinion, he treats it under all its aspects and reasonings, tracing it from its first principles to its consequences and conclusions. In addition to all this, how frugal his diet, his dress how plain! When I enter his chamber, and view him on his couch, I see an image of ancient manners. And all this is commended to our admiration by the nobility of his mind, which does everything on principle, and nothing from ostentation. He looks for his reward to the value of the thing performed, and not to the credit accompanying it. In short, there is not a philosopher by profession who can endure a comparison with him. He frequents not the gymnasia or porticos, nor idly wastes in long disputations his own time or that of others; but his hours are usefully passed in civil and active employments; an advocate for many, and assisting still more with his counsel. But although thus actively engaged, to none is he second in the virtues of temperance, piety, justice, and fortitude. You would be full of admiration could you see with what resignation he bears his illness; and combats with his pains. How patiently he endures thirst; and how still and quiet he is under the treatment necessary for the reduction of a raging fever.

A little while ago he called for me, and some others to whom he was most attached; and requested we would ask his physicians what they thought of the probable result of his illness, that in case they deemed his disorder incurable, he might put a voluntary end to his existence. But if they only thought his recovery would be difficult and tedious, he would remain and endure the struggle; for so much he considered to be due to the entreaties of his wife, and the tears of his daughter, so much to us his friends, that if our hopes of him were not

groundless, he would not defeat them by a voluntary death, —a resolution, in my judgment, to be reckoned among the highest examples of fortitude, and meriting the greatest eulogy. For to rush upon self-destruction with a sort of blind and instinctive eagerness to be freed from our pain, is a resolution which we share with many; but to deliberate calmly on the subject, to weigh well the reasons for life, or death, and to decide according to the preponderance on the one side or the other, is the proceeding of a great mind.

The physicians hold out cheering prospects to us. It remains only that heaven may favour these expectations, and thus relieve me from this painful anxiety. And if such relief shall be granted me, I shall betake myself forthwith to my Laurentine villa; that is, to my books and studious repose. At present my attendance upon my friend, and the anxiety of mind I feel concerning him, leave me no moments for reading or writing. I have now set before you my fears, my wishes, and my ultimate determination. I shall expect in return an account of what you have been doing, what you are now doing, and what you intend to do. But may your communications be more cheerful than mine. The anxiety of my mind will be much relieved by the comfort of hearing that you are suffering no present uneasiness.

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One cannot but lament that a letter distinguished by such good principles and feelings as that which has just been set before the reader, should be spoiled by a deliberate approval of the sin of self-destruction. Pliny was a polite, humane, and accomplished man, but his reasoning powers were not such as to elevate him at all above the standard of heathen ethics.

Nothing, indeed, could more strikingly shew the comfortless character of the ancient philosophy, than that the desperate resource of suicide should by so many of its high professors be regarded as the legitimate hope, and final consolation of those on whom life and mortality had nothing but their dregs to bestow. It is true it was not the general opinion of

heathen antiquity<sup>1</sup> that suicide was lawful under *any* circumstances, but there were few who would deny to the sick without hope of recovery the privilege of anticipating a lingering departure, and hastening the hour of deliverance. What better could be looked for from theological systems so defective in their adaptation to the entire predicament of man; and coming so short of the span and compass of his being. They left him the sport of conjecture, caprice, and terror in all that concerned his unseen and ulterior destiny. Christianity has brought his immortality to light, and has at the same time surrounded the whole range of his existence with its sanctions, its precepts, and its promises. The noble testimony which is borne to its truth by its folding within its wide investiture our entire case and condition under all its modes and mutations, is too apt to be overlooked. Where the heathen theology lays its votary down, the victim of despair, Christianity takes him up, a suppliant for pardon. It makes his sorrow the forerunner of hope, and his pain the preparative to glory. This want of comfort in the theology and philosophy of the heathens was the determining motive with many of their zealous enquirers after truth, when the gospel had begun to diffuse itself, to visit the springs of its welcome intelligence. As soon as they began to quench their thirst at those fountains of living waters, they found their souls refreshed beyond all their former experience, and their vision gladdened with new discoveries, before which the shadows of the old world were driven away and dispersed.

The account which Justin Martyr gives of himself is a remarkable instance of the spiritual fruits of a conviction brought about by a succession of failures in seeking comfort

<sup>1</sup> Vetat Pythagoras injussu imperatoris, id est Dei, de presidio et statione vite decidere. Cic. de Senect. sect. xx. 73. From whom Plato in his *Phædo* borrows the sentiment. "Ὡς ἐν τινι φρουρᾷ εἰμεν δι' ἀνθρώποις, καὶ οὐ διὰ θεῶν ἡμῶν τὴ ταύτης λυτὴν οὐδ' ἀποδίδρασκουσιν." We mortals have a post assigned us to guard, and it does not become us to release ourselves from this charge, and desert our duty. "Pis omnibus retinendus animus est in custodia corporis; nec injussu ejus, a quo ille est vobis datus, ex hominum vita mirandum est, ne munus humanum assignatum a Deo defugisse videamini." *Sæm. Scip.* 3.



from other sources. In his dialogue with Trypho he relates his labours and researches among the oracles and sages of the gentile schools; his toils through the learning of the Pythagoreans, the Stoics, and the Peripatetics, in the vain pursuit of principles on which he could rest with no satisfaction, till finding in their ostentatious systems only disappointment, he made trial of the Platonist, whose lessons he studied in contemplative retirement. This new connexion pleased him well for some time, but landed him at last in a region of like barren speculations. For a long time he extended his enquiries only to multiply his defeats, till in his solitude he met with an aged and venerable man, who, after discoursing with him on the various lore of the philosophers whom he had so fruitlessly consulted, and convincing him of their inability to afford him the solace he was in search of, directed him to the Christian Scriptures as the true treasury of that heavenly wisdom which could alone speak peace to his soul. And this, as he tells us, he found, at last, to be the only sure and profitable philosophy.

The letter which I shall next lay before the reader is of a very agreeable description. The comforts and compensation of old age have been often a favourite theme; and though only *he* is qualified to represent them who has been "enlightened; and has tasted of the heavenly gift, and the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" the heathen mind has not been insensible to the importance of summoning to the aid of sinking humanity whatever solace could be drawn from the arguments and principles within its reach. The sentiments of the heathen moralists correspond in general with the melancholy shades of the picture presented to us by the chorus of the *Hercules furens* of Euripides.

*Old age, heavier than Ætna's rock, lies on my head.*<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, even in heathen pages old age is sometime

<sup>2</sup> — το δὲ γῆρας αὐτὴ  
βαρυτέρον Ἄϊτνας σκοπέλων  
ἐπὶ κρατὶ κίσσει.

pleasingly vindicated, and its advantages produced in strong relief;—no where with more spirit and effect than in the treatise of Cicero on the subject. But in that most interesting performance greater stress is laid on the compensations and employments of age than on its graces and its comforts. These are the privileges of the Christian's hope, and flourish only where the gospel places under the aged head its downy pillow. Cicero's old man stands before us in an attitude of stout resistance to his destiny. "*Resistendum senectuti est, usque vitia diligentia compensanda sunt; pugnandum, tanquam contra morbum, sic contra senectutem.*" He calls upon his old champion to summon all the residue of his strength to the field of duty, and to keep in exercise his remaining energies of mind and body, till the last drop of life's elixir is consumed. "Old age is honourable," says he, "if it defends itself; if it insists on its own rights; if it refuses to be at the disposal of another; if to its latest breath it asserts its domestic supremacy. Thus did Appius Claudius. Four sturdy sons, five daughters, a great household, a numerous body of retainers, old and blind as he was, he maintained in strict obedience. He kept his mind on the stretch like a bow. He suffered not age to master him, or extort from him a languid submission; he preserved not merely an authority, but an empire over his family. He was feared by his servants; revered by his children; valued by all; and in his parental discipline at home he maintained the severity of ancient manners."

The Demonax of Lucian was a mellowed old man:—"He lived to near a hundred years, without pain, grief, or disorder; and without being burthensome or under obligations to any; was always serviceable to his friends, and never had a foe. Not only the Athenians, but all Greece, so loved and honoured him, that when he appeared in public the nobles rose up in respect to him; and there was a general silence. Even in his extreme age he went about from house to house, supped, and passed the night wherever it pleased him; the master always considered himself honoured as by some god or tutelary

genius. The sellers of bread would beg him as he passed along to accept of some from their hands; and happy were they from whom he would receive it. The boys, too, would offer him fruit, and call him their father. On a sedition which broke out at Athens, his presence alone restored tranquillity; the moment he appeared all was silent: he perceived their shame and repentance, and without a word withdrew. The picture has a romantic air, and was probably overcharged. It is nevertheless very pleasing. But the letter of Pliny on the subject may be considered as containing the most agreeable description which heathen antiquity has bequeathed to us of the twilight of a firm and benign old age, casting a ruddy evening glow on the gathering cloud, behind which it cheerfully takes its leave, and retires from the scene of its labours and benefactions.

## TO CALVISIUS.

I DON'T know that I ever passed a more agreeable time than I lately did with Spurrinna. If I should live to be old, there is no man whose old age I should be more ambitious to copy. Nothing can be more regular than his way of life. For my part, I am hardly more pleased with the settled course of the stars than I am with order and arrangement in the lives of men, especially of old men. In young men a certain confusion and agitation may be permitted; but in the lives of old men, with whom the season is gone by for business and ambition, all things should be calm and well ordered. This method of life Spurrinna most perseveringly observes, and matters which we should think of little moment, were they not of daily occurrence, he brings within the circle of his periodical arrangements. The first part of the morning is passed in study on his couch; at eight he dresses himself to go abroad: he takes a walk of about three miles: and exercises his body and mind at the same time. When he is at home again, if friends are with him, topics most worthy to engage the thoughts of accomplished persons are discussed and examined. It no

ands are with him, a book is read to him ; and this is done in the society of his friends, if it is agreeable to them. After this he reposes himself, and again a book, or, what is better than any book, he dilates upon some useful topic ; he afterwards takes an airing in his carriage, either with his wife, a lady of uncommon merit, or with some friend, as with myself very lately. How elegant, how entertaining is his company in this hour of privacy ! What veneration he then inspires ! What events, what examples he brings before you ! What lessons of virtue you imbibe ! Although so tempered is his talk with modesty, that he never seems to dictate. After a ride of about seven miles, he walks again a mile ; he then returns home, and sits awhile, or takes to his couch and his pen. He composes lyrics with the greatest taste and skill, both in Greek and Latin ; and writes with surprising elegance, suavity, and vivacity ; qualities heightened in their effect by the reverence with which he is regarded. When the time for the bath is announced, which in winter is at three, in summer at two o'clock, he perambulates in the sun,<sup>3</sup> without his clothes, for a while, and then takes a long walk at tennis, with which exercise he combats with old age ; after bathing he lies upon his couch till supper time, and in this interval some amusing book is read to him : and all this time his friends are at liberty to partake of this entertainment with or not, as they please ; his supper is elegant, but frugal, served in pure and antique plate. He has likewise in use a table of Corinthian metal, which is his fancy, but not his folly. His repast is frequently enlivened by the attendance of the comedians, that the improvement of the mind may be mixed with the gratification of sense. In summer he encroaches upon the night, but no one thinks the time long ; the entertainment is continued with so much politeness and artistry. By these means he has preserved his senses in full vigour and vigour to his seventy-eighth year, and a body so pliant and vivacious as to carry no mark of age but its wisdom. This course of life is the object of my vows and anticipations, a practice customary with the Romans, being thought contributory to health.

tion ; and as soon as my age shall furnish me with an excuse for retreating from business, I shall enter upon it with the greatest eagerness. In the meanwhile I am worn down with a thousand cares and labours, in the midst of which I look to the example of Spurius as my future solace. He too, as long as it became him, discharged public duties, presided in courts of justice, governed provinces, and earned his present repose by a life of great labour. Therefore I propose to myself the same course, and the same termination. And I now give it you under my hand and seal, that if you see me carried by ambition beyond this object, you may produce this letter against me, and lay your injunction upon me to be quiet when I can be so without incurring the reproach of indolence.

The portrait which the above letter exhibits of a happy old age is so pleasing, and so full of interest, that I cannot dis-

\* Though the Appius Claudius of Cicero, and the Spurius of Pliny are greatly below the Christian standard, they rise in dignity far above the miserable level of our modern men of the world, when drawing towards the end of their nominally Christian course. It would be tedious and uninteresting to justify this observation by examples ; but an instance from the too well known letters of Lord Chesterfield to his son, may not be out of place here, for the sake of contrasting it with one or two specimens of a contrary character. It is thus that he writes from Bath, when age and infirmity begin to claim him as their victim.

"The same nothings succeed one another every day to me, as regularly and uniformly as the hours of the day. You will think this tiresome, and so it is ; but how can I help it ? Cut off from society by my deafness, and disabled by my ill health, where could I be better ? You will say, perhaps, where could you be worse ? only in prison or in the galleys, I confess. However, I see a period to my stay here ; and I have fixed, in my own mind, a time for my return to London ; not invited there by either politics or pleasure (to both which I am equally a stranger) but merely to be at home ; which, after all according to the vulgar saying, is home, be it never so homely." And in another letter written some few years after, he thus alludes to his weight of years and the coming catastrophe : "I feel a gradual decay, though a gentle one and I think that I shall not tumble, but slide gently to the bottom of the hill of life ; when that will be I neither know nor care, for I am very weary."

As an accomplished Christian gentleman, few have deservedly stood high in the esteem and veneration of those around him than the late Sir William Pepys. He lived to a very old age with little decay of his faculties, or his capacities of mental pleasure ; and it is thus he writes to Hannah More to



and without a few further remarks. Considered as a then specimen, it cannot but be regarded with a degree of admiration. However low it may graduate in the scale of life, when brought into comparison with the altitude of the Christian's hope and trust, it is surely far superior in honour and estimation to the "arm chair of dozing age," which, according to Paley, "happiness is to be found as much in either the sprightliness of the dance, or the animation of the chase," or that "mere perception of ease," which the same author balances against "novelty, acuteness of sense, and ardour of pursuit." This is not the comfortable life which is conceived in the mind, and realized in the life of the waiting and contented Christian. The models of

the close of his career: "As I have now accomplished my seventy-year, you will not be surprised when I tell you that my thoughts are employed upon the great change which must inevitably soon take place; I find that the contemplation of it has had any bad effect on my health; not from any confidence arising from a retrospect of my past life, but from the hope that the same gracious Being who has bestowed so many great mercies upon me in this life, will not withdraw his support and protection when I am entering upon another; but will comfort me when I pass through the valley of the shadow of death; not for any merits of mine, but for those of Christ who is held out to us as a propitiation for our sins." In a strain of still more Christian interest, the Rev. John Newton opens his mind to the same lady: "Surely He has done enough to warrant the simple surrender of myself and my all to Him. And now I am old, and know not the day of death, my chief solicitude and prayer is, that my decline in life may be consistent with my character and profession as a Christian and a Minister; that it may not be stained with those infirmities which have sometimes marked the latter days even of good men. May He preserve me from a garrulous, peevish, dogmatical spirit; from impatience, peevishness, and jealousy. If I am to depart, or to be laid aside, may I retire like a thankful guest from a well-furnished table; rejoicing that others are coming forward to serve Him, I hope when I can serve him in this life no more. And then at length when my strength and blood are fainting, if He will deign to smile upon me, I shall smile in death. It is a serious thing to die, and it becomes me now far in my seventy-fourth year, to think seriously of it. Through mercy I can contemplate the transition without dismay. There is a dying strength needful to bear up in a dying hour. The Lord has said, 'As thy day, so shall thy strength be;' and 'my grace is sufficient for thee.' On these good words I humbly rely, for, indeed, in myself I am nothing, and can do nothing; without his gracious influence I am alike unfit to die and to live."

Cicero and Pliny shew, indeed, the animal and moral man in the act of summoning all his resources to palliate and postpone what must be at last submitted to. Under the Gospel covenant, our case is committed to Him who can sustain our feebleness through the fearful and dark passages which lead to the last crisis, and to the crowning consummation of the final struggle. Holy Scripture affords the only safe precepts and patterns by which we may learn to grow old with a good grace. Under this dispensation, and under this tuition, old age becomes the harbinger of bliss; hoary hairs are the blossoms of the grave; the soul exults in the body's decay; and death is the entrance into life.

The letter of Pliny relating the death of Silius Italicus is curious, shewing how an amiable man through the cloudy medium of heathen ethics could contemplate with approbation a self-inflicted death. It contains, however, such reflexions on the brevity of human life, as bring the topic home to the considerate mind.

#### TO CANINIUS.

I HAVE just heard that Silius Italicus<sup>3</sup> has starved himself to death, at his villa near Naples. Having an imposthume, which was pronounced incurable, he determined with a resolution, not to be shaken, to seek refuge from a wearisome disease in a voluntary death. To this concluding scene of his life he had been a very happy person, if we except the loss of the younger of his two sons; but he left his elder and better son, in a flourishing condition, after seeing him attain to the consular dignity. It is true he lost some credit by his conduct under Nero; being suspected of having been the promoter of informations in the reign of that Emperor. But of his interest with Vitellius, he made a wise and beneficent use. He acquired much honour by his government of Asia as

<sup>3</sup> Said to have been an ardent admirer and imitator of Virgil, though holding a far inferior rank as a poet. The second punje war was the subject of his poem, which was extended through many books.

proconsul; and on his retirement from office, he cleared himself from the stains of his early life by an irreproachable behaviour. He passed his time among the first men in Rome without power, and consequently without envy: lying much on his couch, and always in his chamber. He was much sought; and court was paid to him for his worth, not his wealth. He passed his days in erudite conversation, with men of letters, when not employed in composing verses, which bore testimony rather to his industry than his genius. Sometimes he recited his compositions, in order to take the opinions of his auditors. In his advanced age he quitted Rome altogether, and retired to Campania; nor could he be attracted from this retreat by the accession of a new Emperor, which I record as praiseworthy in the Prince who gave this liberty, and equally so in him who had the courage to use it. He was a great lover of the fine arts,<sup>6</sup> and was expensive to a lamentable excess in his purchases. He had several villas in the same places; always buying new ones, and neglecting the old; in all of them he had large collections of books, many statues, and pictures, which he not only enjoyed, but even adored; but above all that of Virgil, the anniversary of whose birth-day he kept with more solemnity than his own; especially at Naples, where he was accustomed to approach his tomb with as much reverence as if it had been a temple. In this tranquillity he lived beyond the seventy-fifth year of his age, with a delicate, rather than an infirm state of body.

He was the last of Nero's consuls, and was the survivor of all who attained to that rank in his reign, Nero having been killed in his consulate. And in thinking of this, a sad reflection on the frail tenure of human existence crosses my mind. What is there so short and stinted as the longest life of man? Does it not seem but yesterday that Nero was on the throne? And yet not one of those who were made consuls in his reign is now alive. But why should I wonder at this when I look around me? Lucius Piso, the father of that Piso who was

<sup>6</sup> Εἶπε φιλοκαλῶς ad emacitatis reprehensionem.

most atrociously assassinated by Valerius Festus in Africa, used to say, he did not see one person in the senate who sat in the house when he was consul: so short is the space which encompasses so large a multitude of living beings; and, therefore, I think that the tears of Xerxes are not only to be pardoned, but to be fully justified, who is reported to have wept when he cast his eyes upon his immense army, and considered how soon an end was to be put to the existence of so many thousands. But if such is the short and perishable duration of life, so much the more are we called upon to give it what length we can; if not by our deeds, which are not always dependent on our own wills, at least by our studies and the exertions of our intellects; and if it is not permitted us to live long, let us strive to leave some memorial to testify to posterity that we *have lived*. I know you need no incitement to what is virtuous; but such is the interest I take in your happiness, that I cannot forbear urging you to continue the course in which you have been proceeding, in return for the same encouragement for which I have so often been indebted to you. How virtuous is the contention when friends stimulate each other by their mutual exhortations to pursue the path of honour and immortality.

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The letter in which Pliny has presented to his friend a minute description of his Tuscan villa is an interesting document, as directing attention to the indications it affords of the tastes, habits, and manners of Rome, as they appear to have prevailed under the beneficent rule of the Emperor Trajan. In the structure, adaptation, and decorations of the Roman villas, may be traced the progress and stages of the social and domestic refinement of that extraordinary people, among whom the greatest properties of human nature were under the misguidance of infatuating superstitions, extravagant errors, and a lofty but perverted genius.

In the villa of Scipio Africanus we have a specimen of the domestic arrangements of almost the greatest man of the

great days of republican Rome. Seneca, in his letter to Lucilius, describing a visit he made to this villa, contrasts it with the style and fashion of the mansions of the Roman nobility of his own time; in which, however, it must be owned, the taste for splendour sought its gratification rather in sculptural and architectural magnificence, than in the petty display of a more showy decoration. "I write this," says Seneca, "from the famous villa of Scipio Africanus,<sup>7</sup> having first paid my devotions to his manes, and the tomb in which I suspect the remains of this great man were deposited.<sup>8</sup> Nor do I in the least doubt that his soul went back to heaven from whence it came. Not because he was the leader of great armies, (for that was no more than was done by the furious Cambyses),<sup>mad</sup> but for his excellent moderation and piety, which were more admirably conspicuous when he left, than when he defended his country. How can I but admire that greatness of spirit, with which he withdrew into voluntary banishment, and thus relieved the state from all apprehensions on his account; for things had come to that pass, that either liberty must injure Scipio, or be injured by him. I found his villa built of square stone, with a wood near it, enclosed by a wall, a tower on

<sup>7</sup> The first Scipio Africanus, whose ascendancy, arising from his personal excellence, and the greatness of his renown, made him the object of much jealousy and detraction. The efforts used to impeach him were met by him with a magnanimous contempt. He disdained to defend himself; and withdrew to his villa at Liternum, where he passed the residue of his days in the cultivation of his farm, and a noble simplicity of life. *Major animus et natura erat, ac majori fortune assuetus quam ut reus esse sciret, et submittere se in humilitatem causam dicentium.* Tit. Liv. l. xxxviii. s. 52.

<sup>8</sup> It had been said by some that Scipio died, and was buried at Rome, and by others at Liternum, and this made Seneca express himself rather doubtfully on this point. *Alin Romæ, alii Literni, et mortuum et sepultum. Utrobique monumenta ostenduntur et statuae. Nam et Literni monumentum, monumentoque statua superimposita fuit, quam tempestate disiectam nuper vidimus.* Et Romæ extra portam Capenam in Scipionum monumento tres statuae sunt; quarum duæ P. et L. Scipionum dicuntur esse; tertia poetæ Q. Ennii. Liv. l. xxxviii. s. 56. Cicero, in his *Oratio pro Archia Poeta*. "Carus fuit Africano superiori noster Ennius. Atque etiam in sepulchro Scipionum putatur is esse constitutus è marmore, s. ix.; and see the note to the passage by Manutius."



each side erected by way of bulwark, a reservoir under the buildings, and green walks, enough to supply an army with water. A bath narrow and somewhat dark, after the ancient custom.

"It was a great pleasure to me to reflect on the habits and manners of Scipio, in contrast with those of our own time. In this corner the dread of Carthage, to whom it was owing that Rome escaped a second capture, was wont to bathe his body wearied with his rustic toils; for he daily exercised himself in husbandry, and tilled the ground with his own hands, as was customary with our forefathers. Under this low and sordid roof stood Scipio. Now a man thinks himself poor and vile, unless the walls are adorned with large and costly circular carvings; unless the Alexandrine marble is coloured with Numidian plaster; unless a rich and variegated coating is spread like a picture on the walls; unless the chamber is covered with a roof or ceiling of a vitreous substance; unless the Thasian stone, once reckoned a rare ornament even in a temple, now enclose our ponds, into which we throw our bodies exhausted by perspiration; unless the water issues out of silver spouts. And as yet I am speaking only of what are for the common people; but what shall I say when I come to the baths of the freedmen? What a concourse of statues, of columns supporting nothing, but placed only for ornament and a vain ostentation of expense! what fine cascades resounding in their fall down a series of steps! In short, to such a pitch of delicacy are we come, that we can tread upon nothing but precious stones."

Seneca proceeds with his subject, enlarging upon the simplicity, and even meanness, of the construction and furniture of Scipio's bath, and then rapturously thus breaks forth,

"How delightful was it to enter these baths, dark as they were, and covered over with a common ceiling of mortar; which one knew that Cato when edile, or Fabius, or one of the Cornelian family had tempered with their own hands."

After the lapse of another century, the costly extent and fashion of these villas spoke the change which had taken place

in the habits of the Roman Patrician. The retreat of Lucullus exemplified the luxury and splendour of the great men, who had acquired in their various commands and provincial governments excessive riches, often the fruit of rapine and oppression. His library with his porticos and galleries for literary conferences, his gardens and groves and shady walks around his mansion, and his numerous apartments for the varied entertainments of his friends, were the admiration of his contemporaries, and maintained their reputation through several generations of those that came after him.<sup>9</sup>

Cicero had many Villas, and some of them very sumptuous; generally situated near the sea, at various distances between Rome and Pompeii, and so remarkable for elegance of structure, and amenity of situation, as to be called by their distinguished owner the eyes of Italy. His favourite seats were at Tusculum, Antium, Astura, and Arpinum; in addition to which may be reckoned his Formian, Cuman, Puteolan, and Pompeian villas, with large plantations and gardens around them; and other smaller retreats to serve as places of rest and refreshment in the journey to the more distant seats; so numerous that some writers have enumerated no less than eighteen. His Tusculan villa, which once had Sylla for its owner, was the most richly adorned and furnished, as being the retreat nearest to the city, and most at hand when the fatigues of the bar or the senate made a speedy change of air and scene particularly desirable. But his more distant villas were sometimes preferable, as affording more retirement and tranquillity; and at Antium especially, he kept his largest collection of books: but they were all constructed and laid out with much cost and elegance; some with porticos for philosophical conferences with his friends, and some with galleries for statues and paintings; in which Cicero appeared to take great delight.

The description by Pliny of his villa, lying at the distance from Rome of about one hundred and fifty miles, and used by

<sup>9</sup> It was in these gardens, near Neapolis, that Messalina, the abandoned wife of Claudius C. was put to death. See the vivid description of this tragedy in Tacit. Ann. lxi. 37, 38.

him for his summer, as that of Laurentinum was for his winter residence, is given in the following letter, with much minuteness of specification, and some graphical vivacity. He addresses himself to Apollinaris, one of his intimate friends.

## TO APOLLINARIS.

I WAS much gratified by the concern you expressed when you heard of my intention to go in the summer to my Tuscan villa; and by your kind purpose of dissuading me from such resolution, being impressed with an idea of the unhealthiness of the situation. It is true that the air of the Tuscan coast is misty and unwholesome, but my house lies at a good distance from the sea, at the foot of one of the Apennines, where the air is considered as particularly salubrious. And that you may lay aside all your fears concerning me, I will give you an account of the country round, and the general agreeableness of my residence, which it will please *you* to hear, and *me* to relate.

The climate is cold and chilling in winter. It is unfavourable to the myrtle and olive, and all other plants requiring a genial temperature. But it suits the bay tree, which is here seen in its most lively verdure, though sometimes, but not oftener than in the vicinity of Rome, it is destroyed by the inclemency of the season. The summer here is wonderfully soft. The air is constantly put in motion, but oftener by a gentle breeze, than a brisk wind. Thence it comes that here you may see an unusual number of aged persons, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers of the young men. You may hear their old stories, and the wise speeches of men of the old time, so as almost to place you in the midst of a former age.

The scenery of the country round is exceedingly beautiful. Image to yourself an immense amphitheatre, such as only the hand of nature is capable of forming. A vast plain bounded by mountains whose summits are crowned with lofty and venerable woods, containing a variety of game. The declivity of the mountains are clothed with underwood. Little hills of a rich earth, on which you would be troubled to find a stone, if you wanted one, are intermixed with these coppices, which

do not yield in fertility to the level lands below ; and though their produce is somewhat later, it is equally well matured. Under these hills, vineyards on every side lie stretched out before you as far as the eye can reach ; at the end of which rises a grove of shrubs, forming as it were its border ; to which again succeeds a wide expanse of meadows and fields—fields requiring oxen of great size, and the strongest ploughs to break them up ; so tenacious is the glebe that it is necessary to give it nine several ploughings before it can be properly broken. The flowery and enamelled meads produce trefoil, and other kinds of herbage, always as soft and tender as when it first springs up ; and all this produce is nourished by perpetual rains. But though there is plenty of water, it never stagnates ; for whatever water the sloping land receives, without absorbing it, is poured into the Tiber. This river passes through the middle of the meadows, navigable only in the winter and spring, when it carries the produce of the lands to Rome. In summer it is so low as scarcely to deserve the name of a great river, but in the autumn it begins to resume its title. It would much delight you to view the region round from the top of the mountain. You would appear to be looking on a painted scene of exquisite beauty, such is the variety and elegance of outline wherever the eye happens to fall. My villa, near the foot of the hill, is so happily placed as to catch the same prospect which is seen from the top ; yet the acclivity by which you ascend to it, is attained by so gradual and imperceptible an ascent, that you find you are on an elevation, without having been sensible of any effort in arriving at it. Behind, but at a great distance, are the Apennine mountains. In the serenest and calmest day we receive the winds that blow from this quarter, but spent and subdued before they reach us by passing through the space interposed. The aspect of a great part of the building is full south, and invites, as it were, the afternoon sun in summer (though somewhat earlier in the winter) into a portico of well proportioned dimensions, in which there are many divisions, and a porch or entrance hall after the manner of the ancients. Before this portico is

a terrace walk, adorned with various figures, having a box hedge, and an easy slope, with the figures of animals in boxes on the opposite sides answering alternately to each other. In the level land below is the soft, I had almost said, the liquid *Acanthus*.<sup>10</sup> A walk goes round this area shut in with tonsil evergreens, cut into various forms.<sup>11</sup> This leads to the gestatio which is made in the form of a circus, with box in the middle cut into various shapes, with a plantation of shrubs, kept by the sheers from becoming luxuriant. The whole is fenced in by a wall, covered by box cut into steps. Beyond this lies a meadow as much set off by nature, as what I have been describing is by art, which again terminates in other meadows and fields interspersed with coppices.

The portico ends in a dining room, which opens upon the piazza with folding doors, from the windows of which you see immediately before you the meadows, and beyond a wide expanse of country. Here also is seen the terrace and the projecting part of the villa, as also the grove and woods of the

<sup>10</sup> This has been supposed to be a species of moss rather than what we call bear's foot; if it be not rather an *Acanthus*, of the kind of which Virgil speaks in his fourth Georgic:—*Aut flexi tacuissent vimen Acanthi*.

<sup>11</sup> If there is any invention or new art to which England has an undoubted and undisputed title, it is that of the pleasure garden. From the time, if ever the time was, when the garden of Alcinous bloomed any where but in the *Odyssey*, to the days of Addison, Pope, Burlington, and Kent, nothing had appeared in the world exhibiting those principles of taste, which in the early part of the last century, and principally under the auspices of the distinguished persons last above-mentioned, began their undisputed reign in this country. Among us these modes of torturing evergreens into fanciful forms, once the ambition of Cicero, Pliny, and Sir William Temple, are now in such contempt as to be below the notice of ridicule and satire.

In those regions of the earth where nature is most bountiful, and pours forth her treasures in richest profusion, as in the eastern parts of the globe, the garden has been formed in absolute neglect of her lessons, and with a cold insensibility to her charms. In Italy, and in France, the same miserable taste in gardening has for ages prevailed. In the middle of the sixteenth century we find a Cardinal at Rome contriving a hanging garden to be suspended on the pillars of his mansion, with a folly hardly less than that of Nero, with his pastures on the roof of his golden palace. The tenacity of this false taste kept its hold for centuries in our own land. Neither in Lord Bacon's "platform of a princely



adjacent garden walk, which has the name of hippodrome. Opposite nearly the middle of the portico, and rather to the back is an apartment which incloses a small area shaded by four plane trees, in the middle of which a fountain running over the brim of a marble bason refreshes with its gentle sprinkling the surrounding trees, and the verdure which they overhang. In this summer apartment there is an inner sleeping room which shuts out both light and noise; and adjoining this is a common dining room, for the reception of my familiar friends. A second portico looks upon the little area, and has the same prospect as the portico I have just described. There is besides another room, which being close to the nearest plane tree enjoys a constant shade and verdure. Its sides are composed of sculptured marble up to the balcony; and from thence to the ceiling there is a painting of boughs with birds sitting on them, not less pleasing than the marble carving; at the base of which is a little fountain, playing through several pipes into a vase, and producing a most agreeable murmur. From an angle of the portico you pass into a very spacious chamber opposite the dining room, which from some

garden," nor in Sir William Temple's essay, which he has entitled "the Gardens of Epicurus," do we find more than the struggles of genius under the yoke of inveterate habit. The broad gravel walk, with rows of laurels, and a summer house at each end, was a leading feature in Moor Park, the scene of Sir William's elaborate taste; and though Lord Bacon ridicules the knots of figures, and other toys of the garden, he recommends the square form, encompassed with a stately arched hedge, to be done like carpenter's work, with little figures, and plates of round coloured glass, gilt for the sun to play upon.

The imagination of Milton could not endure these gaudy fetters. In his paradise nature is vindicated; and it is not unlikely that to the homage paid to her by the great poet, she was indebted for the extension of her empire, in the next century, over the gardens and pleasure grounds of England.

The spectator took up the cause of injured nature; and the paradise of Milton found a consecrated place in Addison's Pleasures of Imagination. To the clipped evergreens, and figures in box, yew, and holly, and all the verdant sculpture of the gardens, the 173d number of the paper called the Guardian, written by Pope, was little short of a sentence of proscription; and his epistle to Lord Burlington helped further to put an end to groves nodding to groves, and alleys in fraternal rows.

of its windows has a view of the terrace, and from others of the meadow; while from those in the front you look upon a cascade which gratifies at once both the eye and the ear; for the water falls from a height foaming in the marble basin below. This chamber is very warm in the winter, as it is much exposed to the sun. And if the day is cloudy the sun's place is supplied by the heat of an adjoining stove. From thence through a spacious and cheerful undressing room you pass to the cold bathing room, in which is a large and dark bath; but if you are disposed to swim more at large, or in warmer water, there is in the same area a larger bath for that purpose, and near it a reservoir which will give you cold water if you wish to be braced again, on feeling yourself too much relaxed by the warm. Near the cold bath is one of moderate heat, being most kindly acted upon by the sun, but not so much affected by it as the warm bath, which projects further. This apartment for bathing has three divisions;—two lie open to the full sun, the third is so disposed as to have less of its heat. Over the undressing room is built the tennis court, which admits of many kinds of games by means of its different circles.<sup>10</sup>

Near the baths is the staircase which leads to the inclosed portico, but not till the three apartments have been passed; and of these one looks upon that little area in which are the four plane trees, another upon the meadows, and the third upon several vineyards; so that they have their respective aspects and views. At one end of the enclosed portico, and taken off from it, is a chamber that looks upon the hippodrome, the vineyards, and the mountains; and next to this is a room having the sun full upon it, especially in the winter. To this succeeds an apartment which connects the hippodrome with the house.

Such is the face and frontage of the villa. On the side of it is a summer inclosed portico, the position of which is high, so

<sup>10</sup> Probably the balls were to be so struck as to fall within one of these circles, which might be variously disposed on the floors and walls.

as not only to command the vineyards, but to seem to touch them. From the middle of this portico you enter a dining-room, cooled by the salubrious breezes from the valleys of the Apennines. From the very large windows at the back you have a prospect of the vineyards, as you have also from the folding doors, as if you were looking from the summer portico. Along that side of the last mentioned dining-room, where there are no windows, runs a staircase affording a private access for serving at entertainments. At the end of this room is a sleeping chamber; underneath this apartment is an enclosed portico, looking like a grotto, which during the summer, having a coolness of its own from being impervious to the sun, neither admits nor needs any breezes from without. After you have passed both these porticos, and where the dining-room ends, you again enter a portico, used in the forenoon during winter, and in the evening during summer: it leads to two several apartments, one containing four sleeping rooms, the other three, which in their turns have the benefit of the sun or the shade. The hippodrome extends its length before this agreeably disposed range of building, entirely open in the middle, so that the eye on the first entrance sees the whole. It is surrounded by plane trees, which are clothed with ivy, so that while their tops flourish in their own, their bodies are decked in borrowed verdure; the ivy thus wanders over the trunk and branches, and by passing from one plane tree to another unites the neighbours together. Between these plane trees box trees are interposed, and the laurel stationed behind the box, adds its shade to that of the planes.<sup>11</sup> This plantation forming the

<sup>11</sup> The description of the garden may be said properly to begin here, exhibiting a taste very different from that which prevails in our country in the improvement of our home scenery. There is, I believe, no other description extant of a Roman garden; which seems, however, in the time of Cicero to have been an object of care and cultivation to some of the most distinguished men of Rome in their hours of retirement. We find much mention made of the gardens of Lucullus, and of other great Romans; but we have no descriptive account of their principles or practice in the disposition or co-adaptation of their grounds for pleasurable effect. It has already been observed in a note to a celebrated letter of Cn. Matus, the friend of Julius Caesar, to Cicero,

straight boundary on each side of the hippodrome, or great garden walk, ends in a semicircle, and is varied in form; this part is surrounded and sheltered with cypress trees, which cast around a dark and solemn shade; while the open day breaks in upon the interior circular walks, which are numerous. You are regaled at this spot with the fragrance of roses, while you find the coldness of the shade agreeably tempered and corrected by the warmth of the sun. Having passed through these winding walks, you re-enter the walk with its straight enclosure, but not to this only, for many ways branch out from it, divided by box-hedges. Here you have a little meadow, and here the box is cut into a thousand different forms; sometimes into letters, expressing the name of the owner, sometimes that of the artificer. In some places are little pillars, intermingled alternately with fruit trees; when on a sudden, while you are gazing on these objects of elegant workmanship, your view is opened upon an imitation of natural scenery, in the middle of which is a group of dwarf plane trees. Beyond these there commences a walk, abounding in the smooth and flexible acanthus, and trees cut into a variety of figures and names; at the upper end of which is a seat of white marble, overspread with vines, which are supported by four small Carystian pillars.<sup>14</sup> From this seat water issues through little pipes, as if pressed out by the persons sitting upon it; and first falling into a stoue reservoir, is re-

that Matus employed much of his time, after his retreat from all public business, in the improvements of gardening and planting. If, as is said, he first taught his countrymen how to inoculate, and propagate some curious and foreign fruits, he was certainly the author of improvements and benefits in useful culture; but if he introduced, as is also said, the art and practice of cutting trees and groves into regular forms and figures, no English gardener, nor, perhaps, any man of taste in the scenery of embellished Nature, will think himself, as far as the eye is consulted, under any obligations to the memory of Matus. See Columel. de Re Rust. l. 12. c. 44. Plin. Hist. l. 12. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Carystus was situated in Eubœa, (Negroponte) and is now called Caristo. It was from this place that the Romans are said to have brought the stone from which they made a sort of incombustible cloth, in which they wrapped the bodies of the dead, and thereby preserved their ashes from intermixture with those of the funeral pile.

erived by a polished marble basin, its descent being secretly managed as always to keep the basin full, without running over. Here when I take a repast, I make a table of the margin of the basin for the heavier and more substantial dishes, the lighter being made to swim about in the form of little ships and aquatic birds. Opposite is a fountain which is incessantly sending forth and taking back its contents, for the water which is sent up to a height falls back upon itself, there being two openings, through one of which it is thrown out, and through the other absorbed again.

Opposite the seat or alcove before mentioned, a summer-house stands which reflects as much beauty upon the alcove as it borrows from it. It dazzles with its polished marble, and with its projecting doors opens into a lawn of vivid green. From its upper and lower windows the eye is greeted with other verdant scenes. Connected with this summer-house, and yet distinct from it, is a little apartment furnished with a couch to repose upon, with windows all round it, and yet sufficiently shaded and obscured by a most luxuriant vine which climbs to the top and spreads itself over the whole building. You repose here, just as if you were in a grove, only that you are not, as in a grove, liable to be inconvenienced by a shower. In this place also a fountain rises, but in the same moment disappears. In many places there are seats of marble, which like the summer-house itself, offer great relief and accommodation to such as are fatigued with walking.

Near each seat is a little fountain. And throughout the whole hippodrome, rivulets run murmuring along, conducted by pipes, and taking whatever turn the hand of art may give them; and by these the different green plots are severally refreshed, and sometimes the whole together. I should have avoided this particularity, for fear of being thought too minute, if I had not set out with the resolution of taking you into every corner of my house and gardens. I have not been afraid of your being weary of reading the description of a place which I am sure you would not think it wearisome to visit; especially as you can lay down my letter, and rest as



often as you think proper. I must also confess, that in this description I have been indulging the attachment I feel to my villa. I have an affection for a place which was either begun or completed, but principally begun, by myself. In a word, (for why should I not disclose to you my opinion, or, if you will my error,) I consider it to be the first duty of a writer to keep his subject in view, and from time to time to ask himself what he has professed to write upon; and he may be sure, that if he keeps close to his subject, he cannot be tedious; but more tedious, indeed, will he be, if he suffer anything to call him away, or draw him off from his subject. You see how many verses Homer and Virgil have bestowed respectively upon the description of the arms of Achilles and Æneas; and neither of these poets can be called prolix on this subject, because he does no more than execute his professed design. You see how Aratus searches out and collects the smallest stars; and yet he is not chargeable with being circumstantial to excess. For this is not the diffusiveness of the writer, but of the subject itself. In the same manner (to compare small things with great) in striving to lay before your eyes my entire villa, if I take care not to wander or deviate from my subject, it is not of the size of my letter which describes, but of the villa which is described, that you are to complain. But I will return to the point from which I set out with this digression, lest I should fall under the censure of my own rules. You have before you the reasons why I prefer my Tuscan villa to those which I possess at Tusculum, Tiber, and Præneste.<sup>15</sup> For in addition to what I have related concerning it, I enjoy here a deeper, solider, and securer leisure; no calls of public business; nothing near me to summon me from my quiet. All is calm and still around me; which character of the place operates like a more genial climate or clearer atmosphere in rendering the situation salubrious. Here I am at the top of my strength in mind and body; the one I keep in exercise by

<sup>15</sup> These seem to be now called Frascati, Tivoli, and Palestrina. All in the Campagna di Roma, at no great distance from Rome.

study; the other by hunting. Nor does any place agree better with my family. Certainly, hitherto, (if it be not too like boasting to talk so,) I have not lost one of all those whom I brought with me hither, and may heaven continue to me this subject of self-gratulation, and this honour to my villa. Farewell.

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Such is the celebrated letter of Pliny describing to his friend the arrangements of his country house, the plan of his garden, and the general aspect of the surrounding scenery. If there is any thing in the letter to entitle it to distinct commendation, it is the stamp it bears of great good-nature, and a disposition to be pleased and contented. Neither a genuine taste for the picturesque, nor the delicacy of sentiment and feeling, which usually accompanies it, is discernible in the composition; and perhaps, it was hardly reasonable to expect to be listened to with untired attention by one's best friend, through such a circumstantial and prolix detail of matters appertaining only to one's own bodily comfort. The products of the intellect are interchanged with mutual delight; and there is always in the traffic of intelligent minds an interest in each other's gratification, that renders self-love the source and spring of a common enjoyment. But in the letter last produced, that the writer was occupied with a subject too exclusive in its nature, to justify the prolixity and minuteness of his specifications can hardly be denied, whatever sympathy his friend might be supposed to feel in his happiness. If the modern reader peruses the description with interest, it is on account of the opportunity it furnishes, of bringing into comparison the modes and habits of ordinary life prevailing at distant junctures, between which ages have elapsed, empires have flourished and decayed, generations have come and gone forgetting and forgotten, and an unseen hand has been conducting the silent march of change and progression.

Our wonder is somewhat excited to find a Roman so polished

as Pliny, in the midst of an original scenery so superb as that of Italy, with its purple valleys, its blue sky and mountain distances, maintaining in all its puerile absurdity the monstrous system of coercing nature, and crossing her bold and beautiful designs with artificial dispositions, ludicrous imitations, and mathematical proportions. The truth may be, that there is implanted in the minds of men a desire of achieving what is difficult. It is difficulty that provokes enterprise, and thus furnishes the means by which it is itself overcome : it is an early and natural stimulus to exertion, and thence it happens that the arts which are attainable only with effort, and are most elaborate, are the first objects of human assiduity. Architecture and sculpture, and the imitative arts, have been the study of early and almost barbarous periods, and to some of these little has been added by modern refinement. But difficulty is sometimes valued only for its own sake, and becomes the aim rather than the incentive ; so that to accomplish a thing because it is difficult is often the ultimate object, and has been one of the main causes of those departures from Nature, and those affectations in the science of ornamental culture, which have prevailed during so many centuries in defiance of Nature's dictates and suggestions.

The following letter is affecting, and very creditable to the sensibilities and moral structure of Pliny's mind. It is observable, indeed, that the expression of amiable and affectionate feelings is that province of letter-writing, in which the pen of this pleasing and instructive author is most successfully employed. The young lady whose death he deploras is presented to us in so interesting a light, that, although we cannot sympathize with the writer in lamenting the decease of one who died so many centuries ago, yet a sentiment of regret crosses the mind in reflecting, that the person whose portrait is here so attractively set forth died in ignorance of that which consecrates a Christian's death. It appears that the young person depicted in this letter had all that a heathen could possess of what was fair and modest, dutiful and pure.

Just pressing with her light footsteps the threshold of an earthly paradise, and in full progress towards the completion of her hopes in an honourable and happy marriage, she was hurried away in a few brief moments from human converse, admiration of friends, and parental love, to become a clod of the valley. These things, it is true, are of every day's occurrence, but there are some things so substantially mournful, and touch so powerfully the inmost chords of vital feeling, that happen as often as they may, they never fail to interest the heart and stir its best emotions; and even at this distance from the event, the rupture of ties, and those agonizing bereavements, which make a prominent part of the history of almost every family, where love and concord prevail, are made too painfully present to the mind by the recital given us in this letter, not to find an echo in the bosom of the reader. One would be apt to think, that there was nothing that we needed less to be reminded of than death, and yet there is nothing, in general, further from our thoughts; we are obliged, therefore, to this amiable heathen writer, not for making it known, but for making it duly felt; not for proving, but for realizing the notorious truth, that in the midst of life we are in death; and that the flower of the field is the most appropriate emblem of our brief existence on earth.

## TO MARCELLINUS.

I WRITE this to you in a state of great sadness. The younger daughter of my friend Fundanus is dead; than whom a young person more agreeable and amiable, more worthy of a long life, I was going to say of immortality, I never have seen. She had not yet completed her fourteenth year; but had the discretion of age, and the propriety of a matron, without losing any of the modesty of the virgin, or of the sweetness that belongs to tender age. How affectionately was she wont to hang on her father's neck! With how much kindness and modesty would she caress us her father's friends! How attached to all who had the care or instruction of her! With

what application and intelligence did she cultivate her acquaintance with books. How sparingly and guardedly did she take her recreations and amusements. With what forbearance, patience, and fortitude did she support her last illness! To the directions of her physicians she was obedient; and while she did all in her power to infuse courage and comfort into her sister and parent, her own body, which had lost its strength, seemed to be supported by the vigour of her mind. This inward strength remained to her to the last verge of her existence, unbroken by the duration of her malady, or by the dread of death: all which occasioned her loss to be the more regretted and lamented. O sad and bitter event! more sad as taking place just when it did; for it happened when she was on the point of being united to a young man of the greatest merit, after the day of the nuptials had been fixed, and we had been invited to attend them. It is impossible to express in words what a wound my mind received, when I heard Fundanus himself (as grief is sure to accumulate motives to sorrow,) ordering the money he had destined to the purchase of clothes, pearls, and gems to be laid out in spices, unguents, and perfumes for the funeral. Fundanus is a learned and wise man, and from early life has devoted himself to studies of the most elevating kind; but all he has gathered from lectures or books to corroborate his mind, is dislodged from his bosom by this great misfortune; and all his other virtues are absorbed by his filial affection. You will pardon, you will even praise him, when you take into consideration the greatness of his misfortune. He has lost a daughter who resembled him, no less in character than in countenance and expression, and bore altogether such a likeness to her parent as was really marvellous.

If you think proper to send letters to him of condolence in this his extreme sorrow, so excusable when all circumstances are considered, let me remind you not to mix reproof with your consolation, or to treat him with any severity, but on the contrary, with softness and sympathy. Indeed, a considerable time must elapse before his mind will give access



to any consolatory arguments. For as a fresh wound dreads the hands of the surgeon, but after a short respite submits with patience; and at length, asks for the healing hand; so the recent anguish of the mind rejects and avoids all attempts to administer comfort, but after a little time is desirous of it, and readily acquiesces in the relief, if applied with gentleness.

The mind of this pleasing letter-writer seems to have been of the most humane and gentle cast; nor is it easy to shew under the Christian dispensation, any model of a man of greater urbanity, or one in whose manners a more engaging flow of good humour, candour, sympathy, and kindness seems to have prevailed, if his familiar letters, continued through a course of years, can be considered as reflecting the real disposition of the writer. He appears to have followed Cicero in many particulars, and, among others, in the adoption of his freedman as his most intimate, cherished, and confidential friend; and his friendship for this person has all the appearance of being grounded on a perfect reciprocity of esteem. It is thus he writes concerning him to his friend Paulinus.

## TO PAULINUS.

I know the humanity with which you treat your servants, and am emboldened thereby to make to you an explicit avowal of the indulgence with which I treat my own. I have ever in my mind that verse of Homer, in which he characterises Ulysses thus:

..... πατήρ δ' ὡς ἡπιός ηεν.<sup>16</sup>

And I am no less pleased with the term used in our own language to express the same paternal principle,—*paterfamilias*.

<sup>16</sup> Odys. B. 47. He was as a father mild. This fatherly mode of governing a state, we must, in justice to the maxims of some of the wisest heathens, admit to be not unfrequently found in the remains of their political writings.

But if my disposition were rougher and harder than it happens to be, the sickness of my freedman Zosimus is of a charm greatly to affect me; and I consider him now in his present circumstances as in a peculiar degree entitled to kind and humane treatment. He is a person of great integrity, very assiduous in his duties to me, well informed, and possessed of talent as a comedian, which is in a manner his profession, and in which he makes a considerable figure; for he speaks with emphasis, justness, propriety, and grace. He plays well upon the harp, better than you would expect from a comedian. And such is the correctness with which he reads orations, histories, and poems, that you would think he had devoted himself entirely to the attainment of this art. I have been the more particular in giving you this account, that you may judge how valuable are the services which are rendered me by this individual. The interest I take in him, endeared by the long affection which has subsisted between us, is much increased by his present danger. Nature has so ordered it that nothing adds so much to our affection, as the fear of losing the object of it;—a sentiment which this man has made me experience more than once. For some years ago in the midst of an animated recitation, he spit blood; on which account I sent him to Egypt, from which place he lately returned confirmed in health. Having since that time upon

Thus in the *Cyropæd.* lib. viii. Crysantas is made to express himself thus *πολλακις μὲν ἤν. ὡ ἀνδρες, καὶ ἄλλοτε κατένοησα ὅτι ἀρχὸν ἀγαθὸς οὐδὲ διαφέρει πατὴρ ἀγαθός.* "I have often observed that a good prince is nothing different from a good father." So in the laws of Charondas the government of a prince is compared to the rule of a parent. Apud. Stobæum. And see the speech of Tullius Rex in Dionys. Halicarn. *Antiq. Rom.* lib. i. c. 36. *ὡς πατὴρ πρὸς υἱὸς αὐτῇ χραμνίτης.* Seneca in his treatise "*De Clementia*" furnishes a full comment on what is above intimated. "*Patrem quidem patriæ appellavimus 'principem,' ut sciret datam sibi potestatem patriam; quæ est temperatissima, liberis consulens, suæque post illos reponens.*" L. i. c. 14. The same idea may be traced through many more heathen authors. The passage in Lucian in commendation of Cato is to the same effect

— Urbi pater est, Urbique maritus;  
Justitiæ cultor.—

Pharsal. L. ii. 388.

On a certain occasion too much tried his voice for several days successively, he was admonished to spare himself by a return of his cough and spitting of blood; on which account I have determined to send him to your farm at Forum Julii;<sup>17</sup> having often heard you say, that the air of that place is very salubrious, and that the milk is very good in complaints of this kind. I request you, therefore, to give directions to your people there to afford him accommodation in your house, and supply him with what he may be in need of, which will be but little; for he is so sparing and abstinent as not only to deny himself delicacies, but even such things as his health requires. I shall furnish him on his journey with all that will be wanted by one of his moderate habits, coming to be under your roof.

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The letters of Pliny to his wife are full of conjugal tenderness, of which the following is a specimen.

TO CALPHURNIA.

I NEVER had greater reason to be out of humour with my occupations, which would not suffer me either to accompany or to follow you in your journey into Campania for the restoration of your health. At this time especially I had it much at heart to be with you, that I might myself observe what strength you are gaining, and what benefit you derive from the retirement, the amusements, and the plenty which the country in which you now are situated affords. Were you in good health, I could not bear your absence without great anxiety; for to be at an uncertainty about one whom one loves is a state of anxious and painful suspense; but now when you are not only absent, but in ill-health also, my heart is torn with a variety of doubts and alarms. I am agitated by all manner of apprehensions and suppositions, and as is

<sup>17</sup> *Fregus* in Provence, the southern part of France.

the case generally with persons in that state, I figure to myself the evils of which I stand most in dread. For these reasons I earnestly entreat you to write to me every day, or even twice a day. I shall feel relief while I am reading your letters, though as soon as I shall have read them my fears will take fresh possession of me.

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Pliny's account of his uncle's death brings very strikingly before us a great natural phenomenon, but is principally interesting as exhibiting the elder Pliny, one of the most eminent and estimable characters of antiquity, under circumstances peculiarly illustrative of his great and distinguishing qualities.

TO TACITUS.

You request me to write you an account of my uncle's death, that you may be able to transmit a more accurate narrative of that event to posterity. I thank you for undertaking to do so; for I consider that an immortal glory will be shed round his death, if it shall be celebrated by your pen. Although he perished by a calamity which, involving in ruin a most beautiful tract of country, and so many populous cities, would of itself make his death for ever memorable; and although he raised for himself a monument by so many enduring works; still to be recorded in your imperishable writings would secure still further the perpetuity of his renown. Those I pronounce to be in a happy case, who by the endowments of heaven are qualified either to perform things worthy of being recorded, or to record things deserving to be read; but most happy are those who are endowed with both these talents; in which number my uncle will be enrolled as well by his own works as by yours. I most willingly, therefore, undertake, nay, I invite the task you commit to me.

He was at Misenum, being there with the fleet under his command, on the 24th of August, when about one in the afternoon, my mother directed his attention to a cloud of unusual

size and appearance. He had just taken the cold bath after the usual exposure of his body to the sun,<sup>18</sup> and had retired to his study. He rose, and proceeded to an elevated spot to have the best view of the phenomenon. It was not ascertainable at first by the spectators from what mountain the cloud issued; but it presently appeared to be Vesuvius.<sup>19</sup>

The cloud was in shape like nothing so much as a pine tree; soaring aloft like the trunk of that tree, and then expanding itself in the form of branches: a form given it, I imagine, by a sudden gust of wind which carried it aloft, and then ceased to impel it; or it might be, that it was stopped in its ascent by its own gravity, and so made to spread itself horizontally. It appeared sometimes bright, sometimes foul and spotted, as it carried up more or less of earth and cinders. Such a spectacle appeared to this man of deep and learned curiosity to be an object of great interest, and well worthy of a nearer inspection. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready; and gave me the liberty of accompanying him, if I wished so to do. I answered that I chose rather to go on with what I was then occupied in studying, and it happened he had given me something to write for him. As he was proceeding out of the house he received a note from Retina, who was

<sup>18</sup> It has been before observed that it was usual with the Romans to anoint their bodies and expose them to the sun; as contributing to their general health.

<sup>19</sup> This eruption of Mount Vesuvius happened in the year 79 of the Christian era; in the first year of the emperor Titus. Pliny the elder, whose proper name was Caius Plinius Secundus, of noble descent, was born at Verona. He acquired some distinction as a military commander, and held the rank and office of Augur, till he was appointed to the government of Spain. His labours in the accumulation of knowledge appear to have been at least equal to those of any writer of antiquity who has aimed at distinguishing himself by his attainments or by the value of his communications. He was deservedly loved and esteemed by Titus and Vespasian, and fully entitled to the encomiums of his affectionate nephew, being a person of great integrity and purity of life. He was, it must be owned, very credulous; often deficient in taste, and fundamentally erroneous in his scientific principles and expositions, and his works suffer much from the corruptions of the text. His style, too, though often spirited and vigorous, is far below the standard of the Augustan age.



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that he was able to make his observ  
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ed. As he approached the mount  
and hotter on the vessels, together wi  
pieces of rock, broken by the inter  
sudden retreat of the sea exposed them  
aground, while the shore was block  
the mountain. Here he hesitated  
and not turn his course back, that be  
ent, but presently his determination w  
to the pilot, "fortune succours the brave  
to Pomponianus." That officer w  
erated by an intervening bay; for  
and indented by the sea breaking into  
danger was not yet immediate, but full  
only for a small increase, to be actual  
placed his luggage on board, determining  
and then contrary, should shift in his favor  
favourable gale carried to Pomponianus  
erected, and encouraged him. And that  
ears by shewing his own sense of safety,  
a bath to be prepared for him; and havin  
on to supper with great cheerfulness, or  
appearance of it, which equally proved th  
ound. In the meantime the places rou  
the wide conflagration, and towering flam

the intense brightness of which was rendered still more glaring by the darkness of the night. But the alarms of his friend, my uncle represented these flames issuing from the burning villages deserted by the inhabitants. After this he retired to rest, and fell into a sound sleep; for his breathing was so hard and laboured by a full and corpulent habit and make, as to be perceived by those who were without. But the ante-chamber of the apartment was so filled with ashes and pumice stones, that if he had remained longer on his couch, he would have been unable to make his way out. Being awakened therefore, he went to Pomponianus, and the rest of the company, who had not been able to sleep as he had done. They then consulted together, whether it would be better to remain in the house or go abroad into the open fields; for the houses were rocking to and fro with unceasing agitation; and in the open air the showers of the pumice stones and ashes, though light, were to be dreaded. On a comparison of these dangers, the open air was preferred; my uncle being directed in this choice by his cool judgment; the others by one fear overcoming another. They carried pillows on their heads bound with skins, which was their only defence against what was falling around them. Now while it was day elsewhere, it was night of extraordinary darkness and density where they were situated; which a multitude of torches, and lights of various kinds helped a little to dissipate. They thought good then to go out towards the shore, to see by a nearer approach to it, whether the sea might be ventured upon, but the dreary wilderness of waters was in too boisterous a state to receive them. My uncle lying down in the place where he was on a cloth spread for him, drank a draught or two of cold water, when the approach of the flames and the fumes of sulphur which went before them put the rest to flight, and obliged him to rise; leaning on two of his servants he raised himself on his legs, and immediately fell down dead; his breath, as I conjecture, being stopped; and the passage to his lungs, which were always weak, and subject to a difficulty of respiration,

being obstructed and closed by the dense and noxious vapours. As soon as light returned, which was not until the third day after he had breathed his last, the body of my uncle was found entire, without injury; and with his clothes just in the state in which he fell; looking more like one asleep than dead. During all this time, I and my mother were at Misenum. But as what relates to ourselves does not belong to this narrative, and what you asked for was the account of the manner of my uncle's death, I will here make an end of my letter. I will only add, that I have truly related to you all those things of which I was an eye witness, and which I was informed of immediately after the accident happened. You will select the circumstances which will be most for your purpose; for it is one thing to write a letter, and another to compose a history; one thing to write to a friend, and another to the world at large.

## TO THE SAME.

You say the letter which I wrote at your request concerning the death of my uncle, has made you desirous of knowing what terrors and dangers I underwent while left at Misenum; which I was just entering upon, when I broke off. Although the recapitulation renews my horror, I will begin. When my uncle was gone, I continued to employ the time which remained to me in the studies which had prevented me from accompanying him. Then succeeded the bath, supper, and an unquiet and short sleep. For many days before there had been observed a tremor of the earth, which had occasioned no great apprehension, as in Campania it is not uncommon; sometimes shaking the public buildings, and sometimes whole towns. But the shock was that night so severe that not only were all things shaken, but they seemed to be on the very verge of destruction. My mother burst into my chamber, where she found me rising with the intention of awakening her, if asleep. We went out together into the court of the house, which separates the sea from the buildings. I doubt

whether I ought to call my behaviour courage or rashness; for I was only eighteen years of age. I took up Livy, and as if perfectly at my ease I began to read, and to make extracts as I proceeded. At this moment, a friend of my uncle, who had just come from Spain to pay him a visit; when he saw me sitting with my mother and reading, reproved her patience, and my careless security. Nevertheless, I continued to pay the same attention to my book. It was now the time of dawn, and yet the dawn seemed to linger in suspense, and to open with a faint and dim lustre. The buildings around us were shaking, and though it was open ground where we stood, yet the place was narrow, and there was great danger of the tumbling ruins. We, therefore, thought it best to leave the town. The multitude followed in the greatest consternation, and what looks like prudence when men are distracted with fear, every one preferred another's suggestion to his own, and thronged and pressed upon us as we were making our way out. As soon as we were clear of the buildings we stood still, and then we were witnesses of a most wonderful and terrific spectacle. The chariots which we had ordered to be drawn out, though they stood on a perfectly level ground, were tossed backwards and forwards, and could not, though supported by large stones, be kept steady. The sea seemed to be reabsorbed, and driven back by the convulsive motion of the land. The strand was extended, and many marine animals were left upon the dry sands. On the other side a black and horrible cloud, divided and broken by the tortuous and vibratory flashings of an igneous vapour, opened upon us with long trains of fire like lightning, but of greater magnitude. It was then that our Spanish friend, addressing my mother and myself with great heat and urgency, spoke thus: "If your brother, and your uncle be safe, he must wish you to be safe also; if he has perished, it was his wish, no doubt, that you should survive him: therefore, why do you delay your escape from this place?" to which our answer was, that while we were doubtful of his safety we could not think of our own. Upon this he rushed out, and

setting off at full speed put himself out of the reach of the danger. And soon afterwards the cloud began to descend upon the earth, and to cover the sea. It surrounded the island of Caprea, and shrouded the promontory of Misenum. My mother then entreated and conjured me to save myself in whatever way I could. That as I was young it was very possible. That she was aged and infirm, and would cheerfully meet death, so long as she was not the cause of mine. I on the contrary, refused to save myself unless we could be saved together; so grasping her hand I urged her to go forward. She reluctantly complied, and went on reproaching herself for retarding my flight. The ashes now began to fall upon us, though as yet in no great quantity. I looked back, and beheld a dense cloud behind us coming fast upon us like a torrent. Let us, I exclaimed, turn out of the road whilst we can discern anything; lest if we keep in a straight course we shall be trodden down in the dark, by the crowd rushing forward in the same direction. We had hardly sat down to rest, when night came on, not such as it usually is when cloudy and moonless, but such as it is in a shut up place from which all light is excluded. Nothing was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screaming of children, and the cries of men. Some were calling for their parents, some for their children, some for their wives; they could know each other only by their voices. These were lamenting their own misfortunes; those the fate of their families and connexions; some from the very fear of death were praying for death, as a deliverance from fear. Many were imploringly lifting up their hands to the gods; some were beginning to think there were not any gods anywhere; and that the world was about to be lost in final and eternal darkness. Not a few aggravated the real by false or imaginary dangers. Some made it believed that Misenum was in ruins; and others that it was in flames. It now began to be a little lighter; but it hardly looked like the light of the natural day, but rather the indication of an approaching eruption of fire. And such in truth it was; but at a greater distance from us. Then came on the darkness again; and



gan a shower of ashes, dense and heavy ; and from time to time we shook them off, and emerged from them ; or we could have been covered with, and buried under them. I might claim credit for being able to say of myself that not a groan, or an expression of fear fell from me ; save that I did believe, (and such belief is a miserable, but strong consolation in this scene of mortality,) that the time was come when all things were to perish with me, and myself with all things.

At length this dense darkness grew gradually thinner, till it went off into a cloud or smoke. And then the true day began to appear. Even the sun began to shine, but with a dim light ; as is its appearance when under an eclipse. All things seemed changed that met our trembling sight, being covered with accumulated ashes as if by snow. Returning to Misenum, and refreshing our wearied bodies, we passed an anxious and dubious night, between hope and fear ; but certainly with more fear than hope, for the earth still trembled ; and many rendered crazy by their fears sported with the misfortunes of themselves and others by terrifying predictions. But as to myself and my mother, though we had suffered so much, and were expecting still more, we determined not to leave the place till we could learn the fate of my uncle.

All this you will read with no view to insert it in your history, of which distinction it is by no means deserving ; and if it should appear to you to be not even worthy of being made the subject of an epistle, you must blame yourself for having asked for the relation.

#### TO PRISCUS.

THE ill health of Fannia<sup>21</sup> gives me great uneasiness. She contracted this illness while attending on Junia, one of the

<sup>21</sup> Fannia, the wife of Helvidius, was the daughter of Thraseus Patus and Junia, which Arria was the daughter of Cæcina Patus and Arria his much celebrated wife. Rome, in her republican or imperial grandeur, has hardly had to boast of a more renowned and remarkable family.

The grand parents of Fannia were Cæcina Patus and Arria. Pliny, in a

vestal virgins; of her own accord at first, as being her right, and afterwards by the authority of the priests: for the virgins when by any malady they are obliged to withdraw themselves from the temple are committed to the care and custody of some matron. In the discharge of which of Fannia was seized with this dangerous disorder, which fever, attended with an increasing cough, emaciation, and total prostration of strength. Her mind and spirits still ma-

letter to Nepos, the sixteenth of the third book, relates two or three similar anecdotes of the elder Arria and her husband; but that which was the subject of the well known epigram of Martial, has given a lasting name to the husband. When Cæcina's death was decreed, and the Imperial mandate sent to him, giving him the option of dying by the sword or by poison, the letter came first into the hands of Arria; on which she immediately resolved not to survive her husband. When he came to her, he found her with the tyrant's letter in one hand, and a dagger in the other. On his approach, gave him the order, and at the same time stabbing herself, "Pætus," she said, "it is not painful," and expired; and the husband forthwith followed his example. The story is variously told. But according to Pliny, Scribonius had taken up arms in Illyria against Claudius, where he lost his life; Pætus, who had joined him, was brought prisoner to Rome, and condemned to death. According to the paper in the Tatler, written by Steele, Na Cæcina Pætus was condemned under Nero. In the main point of the story all accounts agree, and the fame of the lady has received the seal of its perpetuity from the hand of Martial, whose lines are as follow:—

Costa suo gladium cum traderet Arria Pæto,  
Quem de visceribus traxerat ipsa suis;  
Si qua fides, vulnus quod feci non dolet, inquit;  
Sed quod tu facies, hoc mihi, Pæte, dolet.

But the memory of the deed owes something also to the sculptor's art. In the pleasure house belonging to the Villa Ludovisa at Rome, there is a fine statue representing the action. Pætus is stabbing himself with one hand, and holding up the dying Arria with the other. Her sinking body hangs so loose that it appears to be relaxed. *Wright's Travels*, 334.

Arria, the daughter of Cæcina Pætus and his celebrated wife, was married to Thraseas Pætus, whose character and death under the Emperor Nero affecting recorded in the 16th book of Tacitus's Annals. No one who reads the winding up by that historian of the fatal catalogue of Nero's butcheries or the tragical end of Thraseas and Soranus, without a feeling like the sorrow of recent sorrow, so vivacious is the picture there given us. The fine introduction of the narrative in which the particulars are presented to us, is in the

in their vigour; worthy of her husband Helvidius, and her other Thrascas. In other respects she sinks fast; so that I am not only in fear for her, but am in great sorrow: and the principal cause of my grief is this—that a woman is about to be withdrawn from the eyes of the Roman state, whose equal I doubt whether it will be its lot again to contemplate. How eminent is her chastity, her sanctity, her dignity, her constancy! Twice has she followed her husband into exile. Ano-

jection of every scholar. “*Trucidatus tot insignibus viris, ad postremum pro virtutem ipsam excindere concupivit, interfecto Thrascæ Patro et Barea Fratre, olim utrinque infensus; et accedentibus causis in Thrascæam,*” &c.

The termination of the life of Thrascas was very similar to that of Seneca. A Quæstor with the message of death came to that illustrious Senator while he was in the gardens of his Villa, at the decline of the day; where he was found surrounded by an assemblage of many dignified characters of both sexes, engaged in attending to the expositions of Demetrius, a teacher of the Cynic dogmas; whose discourse at that time was upon the nature of the Soul, and its existence in a state of separation from the body. His friends began to testify their sorrow, bearing the sentence against him, by their tears, for which he reproved them; and, in particular, dissuaded his wife from the resolution she had at first formed to imitate the example of Arria her mother, that she might not leave their father without parental protection. Then leading Demetrius and his son-in-law Helvidius into his chamber, he opened the veins of either arm, and bade his son-in-law to look on, as these were times in which it was expedient to strengthen the mind by the contemplation of examples of constancy, he resigned himself to a slow and painful departure.

Helvidius Priscus, the husband of the subject of this epistle of Pliny, was sent into banishment under the reign of Vespasian, for his refractory republicanism. Suetonius, after remarking that no innocent person was put to death under this reign, except where Vespasian himself was either absent and ignorant of the case, or was under an erroneous impression from false representations; thus relates the end of Helvidius Priscus. On his return from his government in Syria, he refused to salute Vespasian as *Cæsar*; and, while dictator, omitted even the mention of his name in his edicts. It was not, however till, in a violent dispute which took place between them, the unbending republican treated the Emperor as his equal, that he was sent into exile. An order followed for his execution, but the Emperor soon repented of this severity, and sent messengers after him to revoke the sentence. The message of mercy was ineffectual. A false report was brought to the Emperor that the sentence had been already executed, and Helvidius was sacrificed to the malice of his enemies. Thrascas and Helvidius were both made for other times, and were equally incapable of submitting to the course of events, or of bringing back the ancient order of things.

ther time she herself was banished on her husband's account. For Senecio, when he was tried for writing the life of Helvidius, having said in his defence that he had been requested to undertake that work by Fannia; Metius Carus, having asked her in a menacing manner, whether she had made that request, she answered, I did so request him; and then, whether she had furnished him with materials for his work; and whether she had so done with the privity of her mother; she admitted her own part in that transaction, but affirmed her mother's ignorance of it. In short, not a word escaped her which betrayed the smallest emotion of fear. She dared even to preserve a copy of those very books, which the Senate, from necessity, and the terror excited by the state of the times, had ordered to be suppressed; while they decreed the confiscation of the property of the author. She took with her in her exile the cause of it.

How agreeable is this same person in her manners, how affable, how amiable as well as venerable,—an union of qualities how rarely found! she will be hereafter the model to be proposed to our wives for their imitation; and to which our own sex may look for an example of fortitude: whom while we have the happiness of a personal intercourse with her, both seeing and hearing her, we yet regard with the same admiration as that which we feel in reading of those who are celebrated in story. And, indeed, for my own part I cannot but dread the fate of that illustrious house as in danger of being shaken and convulsed to its very foundation, notwithstanding there are descendants which promise a continuance of the succession; for what must be their virtues, and their actions, to prevent us from considering her as the last of the family. To me it is most distressing and harassing to reflect that in her I am, as it were—a second time losing her mother—the mother worthy of so admirable a person, (and what more in her praise can I utter) whom, as she was restored to me in her daughter, so will she be again taken from me with her, and thus my grief will be repeated, and my wound will be opened afresh. I have venerated both: I have loved both: which of

the two I more loved I cannot say ; they never wished to be separately thought of. I was devoted to them in their prosperity, and no less so in their misfortunes. I was their comforter in their exile ; and on their return, the vindicator of their innocence. But I did not, because I could not, do all for them that they were worthy of, and that consideration makes me the more anxious for the preservation of Fannia—that I may yet have the opportunity of discharging my obligations. It is in this very anxious state of mind that I now write to you : which anxiety should heaven turn into joy, I shall not regret the alarm under which I have been suffering.

## TO PATERNUS.

I HAVE been much afflicted of late by the illnesses and even deaths, and of the young too, which have taken place among my domestics. This calamity is attended, however, with two consolations, which, though by no means a balance to my great grief, are still consolations. One is, that I have made it easy to them to obtain their freedom, (for I hardly think they have died prematurely, who have previously been released from servitude;) another, that I have been in the habit of allowing them in a manner, to make their wills, which I hold in as much respect as if they were good in law. They give such directions, and make such requests as they please, and I attend to them without delay. They make what distribution they will among their relations and friends, so long as they confine it to such as are in the house, for to my servants I consider my house as their commonwealth. But, although, my sorrow is somewhat assuaged by these considerations, yet the very feeling of tenderness, which has induced me to permit this to be done, will account for my being so overpowered by sorrow on this occasion; and yet I would not, therefore, have a heart less disposed to sympathy. I am well aware that others regard these cases as only so much loss; and they think that to look upon them in this light shews them to be great and wise men. Whether with such a dis-



position they are great and wise men, I know not; but they are not men: for it is the part of a man to sorrow and to feel as a man; to bear up against misfortune, but to admit, and not to be in no need of solace. But of this perhaps I have said more than I ought, though less than I wished, for there is a certain pleasure in giving utterance to one's grief; especially when one pours one's sorrow into the bosom of a friend, who will commend one's tears, or at least pardon them.

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The specimen which the last letter furnishes of the good nature and humanity of the writer, is in the most agreeable harmony with that to which the reader's attention is next invited. I introduce the following letter as affording a parallel, or rather contrast to that of St. Paul to Philemon, which last-mentioned letter, is well entitled to take its rank among the best specimens of ancient compositions in the department of letter-writing. Pliny's letter is in the terms following.

TO SABINIANUS.

YOUR freedman, with whom you told me you were so much displeased, came to me, and throwing himself at my feet, as if it had been to yours, clung to me, wept much, entreated much, and then regarded me in silence. In fine he convinced me of his sincere repentance; I do believe in his amendment, as he has made the first step towards it, by being sensible of his error. I know you are greatly displeased with him, and I know too not without reason; but clemency is entitled to the greatest commendation, where there is most to justify resentment. You have had an affection for the man, and I hope you again have it. In the mean time, only suffer yourself to be entreated for him. You will have full right to be angry with him again, if he should again transgress; and your anger will be more excusable, after giving proof of your clemency. Allow something to his youth, something to his tears, and something to your own disposition to forgive. Do not any longer make

him uneasy ; and I will add, do not make yourself so, for you vex yourself when, with your mild disposition, you suffer yourself to be angry. I am afraid lest I should seem rather to compel than to supplicate, if I should join my entreaties to his. Yet still I must do it, and that the more freely, as I have sharply and severely reproved him ; threatening him in plain terms that I will never entreat for him again. This I said to him, as it was necessary to alarm him, but I do not say the same to you ; for it is not impossible, that I may have occasion again to beg and obtain your forgiveness for him ; should his error be of such a nature, as that it may be becoming in me to beg for him, and you to pardon him.

## TO THE SAME.

You have done what is very gratifying to me, in having again received into your favour your freedman, whom you once so kindly regarded, in compliance with my letter. I think this act will give you pleasure in the reflexion upon it. It certainly gives *me* pleasure : first, because I see in it a proof, that in the midst of your anger you do not lose the government of yourself ; and in the next place, because it is a proof that my interest with you is such that you are pleased either to respect my authority, or to comply with my wishes. I therefore both commend and thank you ; and at the same time I venture to advise you to be disposed in future to pardon the errors of your people, though there should be none to intercede for them.

## ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON.

PAUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon, our dearly beloved, and fellow-labourer ; and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus, our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house : grace be to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my

prayers; hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; (I pray) that the communication of the faith may become effectual, by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet, for love's sake, I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ, I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds; which, in time past, was to thee unprofitable, but now (will be) profitable to thee and to me; whom I have sent again: thou, therefore, receive him—that is, mine own bowels, whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel. But without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly. For, perhaps, he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but now much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord!

If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he has wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit, I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels in the Lord.

Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say. But withal prepare me also a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow labourers.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

FROM ISIDORE OF PELUSIUM TO IRO; THE RHETORICIAN,  
CONCERNING HIS DELINQUENT SLAVE, EN-  
TREATING PARDON FOR HIM.

A YOUNG man came to me the other day, in my retreat, and having found the keeper of the door, requested to be admitted to have access to me. As it is my custom to receive all who come to me, and to suffer them to rest and converse with me, he was invited in. The moment he entered he threw himself on the ground, and spoke not a word, till after he had relieved himself by a flood of tears. When having taken him by the hand, and promised to succour him to the best of my ability, I asked who he was, and what he stood in need of? He said he was your servant, and that through ignorance he had committed so grievous a fault, that, as he feared, it exceeded all hope of pardon. My first impression was that of wonder; for I can hardly believe that Iro, a lover of Christ, who has known, and experienced that grace, which claims liberty for all men, can allow himself to possess a slave. My next feeling was that of sadness; for we are commanded by Christ to forgive one another every trespass, however often repeated. He taught this, and he practised it. In these words he taught it: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And he practised it when he delivered the Adulteress, the Publican, the Samaritan, the paralytic, and Peter, the head of the company of Apostles, from their sins and infirmities of the body and the spirit. Wherefore, if you desire to imitate Christ, pardon those who offend thee, where their offences are great. Faults of small magnitude most men will overlook, when their forgiveness is entreated: but the greater offences those only remit, who have a conscientious fear of God, and expect from him to be greatly rewarded for their virtuous actions.

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Above is a letter of St. Paul contrasted with two others on the same subject, the one by a polished heathen, whose na-

tural good disposition had, it may well be conceived, been insensibly improved by contact with the new dispensation which had made itself felt where it was not acknowledged ; and the other by a Christian Father, the disciple of Chrysostom, and an eminent preacher and expounder of evangelical doctrine. Of Pliny's letter, who can dispute the soundness, good sense, and humanity ? or deny that it makes an extraordinary approach to the temper and tenderness of the blessed Apostle ? he adverts even to the possible repetition of his fault by the offender after experiencing the clemency of his master, and reserves the privilege of a fresh application in his behalf, making, however, the exercise of such privilege to depend upon the circumstances which might characterise the future offence ; and adding that he had thought it prudent to withhold this intention from the culprit. The argument drawn from the pleasure attendant on the act of paroling, is urged with much sensibility and address.

In the letter of Isidore, the sentiments are more lax and diffuse ; less prudently enforced, and on the whole, perhaps, less calculated to obtain their object. The precept uttered by the sacred authority to which Isidore refers, must, it is true, be taken without restriction or curtailment ; but it is not to be understood as intending to forbid the necessary castigation for crime and transgression, administered in mercy ; while it inculcates without limit the forgiveness of the heart, and the extinction of every motive of anger or revenge.

There is in the letter of St. Paul, the perfect union of prudence, humanity, and delicacy. As a mere human composition, it is said by Dr. Doddridge, to be a master-piece of its kind, and if we duly regard the constituents of excellence in letter-writing, the commendation seems hardly to be carried too far.

The parts of the epistle are remarkably well adapted to each other ; and are united in their tendency to promote the suit of the writer by conciliating the favour of the person written to. Even the egotism of the writer operates to strengthen his appeal, and to give a certain weight to his intercession. So much argument in so small a compass is not easy to be found ;



It is the distinguishing excellence of the epistle, that all topics of reasoning are drawn from the private and personal connexion subsisting between the parties.

Written by one in bonds, on behalf of one of the lowest order in life, but the child of his fostering care and spiritual adoption, the letter of St. Paul has a peculiar pathos, and grand and design as special as it was important. By addressing the letter, not to Philemon singly, but to the various persons of his family, their aid in the promotion of his suit was very discreetly bespoken; and the preface is truly conciliating, by informing the person addressed of the share he has in the prayers of the writer, and of the opinion entertained of his increasing faith and love; thus preparing and disposing him without artifice or pretence to listen with favour to the request of the letter. The commendatory terms made use of were such as could not fail to excite a favourable impression in the bosom of Philemon, especially as having reference to those qualities which it was the interest of the applicant to call to exercise on this occasion. The appellation of brother, and the cursory allusion to the age and apostleship of the writer, and the authority with which he was invested by the Church to which they both belonged, and to which Philemon owed a special obedience, besides the filial affection which Paul might claim for himself personally as his father. Christ, are means of which he makes a very affecting and judicious use. The language is that of supplication without servility. There occurs a repetition of some of the beseeching terms, which coming from so gifted a person, and experienced a teacher, conduces greatly to the general effect; to which effect much persuasive efficacy is added by the prospect opened of advantage of the most substantial kind to Philemon, from those new qualities in his servant, in which Paul had derived so much assistance and solace; and on whom he therefore thinks it not too much to bestow the title of son.

The verse which is, perhaps, most to be admired for its duty and pathos is the fifteenth, which has been observed

to be not unlike the apology which Joseph makes for his brethren; drawn from the merciful display of that Providence which so often educes good out of evil: "for perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever." Ταχα γαρ δια τουτο εχωρισθη προς ωραν, ινα αιωνιον αυτον απεχης. The terms used throughout the letter are very aptly chosen, but none with more delicacy and grace than the word εχωρισθη, he was *separated*; in which a shade is thrown upon the real act of *running away*. And though some consider the last words of the verse, ινα αιωνιον αυτον απεχης, as only implying the master's repossession of his slave for life, our translators appear to have taken the passage in a higher and holier sense, as intimating an ever-enduring bond of union and fellowship in Christ.

What a man writes with his own hand, does seem to carry more the impress of his mind than what he writes by the hand of another; and this sort of assurance of sincerity is not lost sight of by the apostle; who thus attests his undertaking to make good what in a worldly view might be considered as lost to the master by the truancy of his slave; but the asseveration so confirmed has its chief value in the opportunity it gives the writer of grounding his claim to a compliance with the request of the letter on a debt of everlasting obligation. "Albeit I do not say unto thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides."

The twenty-first verse is expressed in terms extremely delicate and prudent. "Knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say," υπερ ο λεγω ποιησεις, by which nothing is asked, but everything is implied.

That more was done for Onesimus than St. Paul distinctly and expressly asked for, there is good reason to think; and that Philemon did not only comply with the request of the apostle in pardoning his slave, but that Onesimus obtained at the hand of his Christian master his entire freedom. By the epistle to the Colossians, it appears that Onesimus was sent by St. Paul in company with Tychicus, both of whom are called his beloved brothers, to inform the people of Colosse,

his countrymen, of all the things which were doing at Rome in the service of the gospel.

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Pliny's letters of compliment and kindness are among the most elegant of that description. The following is produced, because it testifies to the harmonious intercourse he maintained with his relatives and intimates. Fabatus was the grandfather of Calphurnia, Pliny's wife, and appears to have been a man of great wealth, distinguished by his taste, liberality, and various other excellent qualities.

TO FABATUS.

I HAVE received your letters informing me of your erection of a noble portico to be a memorial of yourself and your son ; and that the next day you engaged to be at the expense of ornamenting the gates of the city,<sup>22</sup> so that the completion of one act of liberality is with you only the beginning of another. In the first place, I rejoice in everything that concerns your glory ; of which some part always reaches to myself, as having the honour of your alliance. In the next place, I am gratified by seeing the memory of my father-in-law thus secured from perishing by such beautiful structures ; and lastly, I rejoice to see such honour conferred on our native province. As everything that tends to its embellishment, by whomsoever done, is agreeable to me, so it is always most so to me when done by yourself. For the rest, my prayer to the gods is, that they would continue in you this generous disposition, and give you the longest term of existence to exercise it in. For I feel persuaded, that as soon as your next kind promise is performed, you will commence some other benefaction. Generosity when set in motion is not easily stopped, so does she lead us on and charm us by her beauty.

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<sup>22</sup> Comum, or Novum Comum, a small town of the ancient Insubria, near the Lacus Larius, and within no great distance from the Padus, or Po, was the birth-place of the younger Pliny. The Insubres were the inhabitants of

No entire consistency of sentiment or moral tact can be looked for under the discipline of heathen ethics; and we shall find Pliny not unfrequently maintaining propositions at variance with the general tenour of his maxims of life and conduct; but on the whole the character of Pliny comes so near the gospel standard in kindness, gentleness, and brotherly love, that it is almost a subject of wonder that having had so close an observation of the Christian religion in his province of Bithynia, he should have yet remained untouched by the testimonies of its practical influence, and unawed by the marks of its celestial origin. But our wonder in the consideration of this subject is greatly increased when we see this proficient in the school of humanity, this writer of the letter to Caninius, wherein he laments with tears the violent death of a gentle dolphin, extorting what he calls the real truth by putting to the torture two female slaves, accused of having acted in the character of Christian functionaries, and in whom, he admits, he could discover nothing more than an absurd and excessive superstition. The story of the dolphin has in it a character of childish credulity, but it is mingled with so much good nature, and kind-heartedness, that in an age and a country in which (such is the expansion which since the slave emancipation, the feelings of humanity have received in breadth and compass) a league has been formed for the protection of the brute creation, it may be read with a kindly interest.

TO CANINIUS.

I HAVE accidentally met with a story, which, though well accredited, has very much the air of fiction, and is worthy of your luxuriant, and truly sublime and poetical genius. It was told me at a table, where the conversation happened to turn upon various extraordinary occurrences. The relator was a man very worthy of credit; but what has a poet to do with plain matters of fact. Still, however, it must be said that my

that tract of country, bordering on the Po, now forming the district or region of which Milan is the capital city.

author, in this case, was a person to whom you would have given full credit for any fact which, if you were about writing a history, you might wish to record. There is a colony in Africa called Hippo, on the sea coast; and near it is a navigable lake, communicating with the main ocean by an estuary, which ebbs and flows with the flux and reflux of the tide. The inhabitants of all ages divert themselves with fishing, sailing, or swimming in it; especially boys, who are drawn thither by idleness or the love of play; and whose pride and glory it is to swim as far as possible into the deep water. He who leaves the shore and his companions at the farthest distance is the conqueror. In this contention one of the boys, more bold than the others, ventured out towards the opposite shore. He was met by a dolphin,<sup>19</sup> which sometimes swam before him, sometimes behind him, then played round him, and at length

<sup>19</sup> It was a notion not uncommon among the ancients, that the brute creatures have laws and morals bearing some analogy to the human species. The history of animals by Elian abounds with instances in support of this position. Το δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἀλογοῖς μετεῖναι τινος ἀρίτης κατὰ φύσιν—καὶ πολλὰ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πλινιστημάτων καὶ θαύματα ἔχειν συγκληρωμένα, τοῦτο ἤδη μύθος. That dumb animals are partakers by their nature of a certain kind of virtue, and possess many and wonderful properties in common with mankind.

The elephant was at least as much celebrated for his intellectual endowments by the ancients, as at this day by the people of India and Persia. See Plin. H. N. viii. Aristotle calls these supposed properties *μιμήματα τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ζωῆς*. H. A. ix, 7, and Cicero *Simulachra virtutum*. II De Fin. 33.

The Pythagoric doctrine of the metempsychosis tended much to promote a compassionate feeling for the brute creation. Diog. Laert. viii. 77. Porphyry. de Abst. ab Animal, l. 3 and 4. And the Stoics by holding the doctrine of the *Anima Mundi*, of which the souls of all animals, brutes as well as men, were parts or emanations, of the same nature, as being all derived from the same fountain, and varying only in force and operation, fostered the same benevolent regard for the feelings and comforts of the inferior creatures endowed with life. To the same doctrine Virgil alludes in those beautiful lines of the fourth *Georgic* 219:

His quidem signis, atque hæc exempla secuti,  
Esse apibus partem divini mentis, et haustus  
Æthereos dixere: Deum namque ire per omnes  
Terrasque, tractusque maris, cælumque profundum.

The Stoics attributed to brutes, not our passions and affections in strict identity of kind, but the shadows and resemblances of them. Thus Seneca, in the



took him upon his back, then let him down; and again took him up, carrying him at first quite out into the deep parts, till after a little time he turned back with him to the shore, and landed him safe among his companions. The fame of this strange affair spread through the colony. All gathered about the boy as a sort of prodigy, to ask him questions, and hear his account of the miracle. The next day the shore was besieged with spectators, all looking eagerly towards the sea; and the lake which is almost like the sea. The boys commenced swimming; and among others the boy above-mentioned, but with more caution than on the former occasion. The dolphin again appeared, and came to the same boy, who swam away with the others. The fish, as if inviting and recalling them, leaps on the water and dives under it, turning about and about in various circles. This was repeated on the next day, and on many days successively, until the inhabitants, inured to the sea from their childhood, began to be ashamed of their fears. They approach him, play with him, and call him to them. They next begin to touch him, and he in return offers himself to be stroked by them. And especially the boy, who was his first acquaintance, swam to him, leaped upon his back, and was carried about by him. Their affection became

third chapter of his first book *De Ira*,—*Muta animalia humanis affectibus carent: habent autem similes illis quosdam impulsus.*—*Metus autem, sollicitudinesque, et tristitia, et ira non sunt, sed his quedam similia id. ibid.* These shadows and resemblances of human appetites, affections, and qualities, seemed to entitle the mute animals to the consideration and regard of human beings, as having, in some respects, a fellowship of condition with them; and so becoming and graceful in the character of our own species is this sympathy with these poor dependents on our will, and ministers of our pleasure, that one cannot but regard with a sort of complacency even some prejudices and errors opinions which favour its influence. Ulysses was not less a hero, because Homer has made him weep over his faithful dog when he expired at his feet.

αὐτὰρ ὁ νοσφιν ἰὼν ἀπομαρξάτο δάκρυ,  
'Ρῖα λαθὼν Εὐραίου.

Adown his cheek the tear unbidden stole,  
Stole unperceived; he turn'd his head, and dried  
The drop humane.

*Odys.* xvii.

actual, and all fear was dismissed on either side. The confidence of the one, and the courtship of the other went on increasing; while the rest of the boys on the right and left were surrounding and encouraging their companion. What was very wonderful, this dolphin was accompanied by another, which seemed to follow only as a spectator and attendant, for he did not do, or submit to, the same things as the other, but only conducted him backwards and forwards, as the other boys led their comrade. It is really hardly credible, but yet it is as well vouched for as what has been already related, that this dolphin who thus played with the boys and carried him on his back, would come upon the shore, and when inconvenienced by the heat, would roll himself back into the sea. It is reported that Octavius Avitus, the deputy of the proconsul, from a false notion of religion, poured some ointment upon him as he lay on the shore; the novelty and smell of which made him retreat hastily into the sea. And when he appeared again, which was not till after some days, he seemed dull and sorrowful. He soon however recovered his strength, and repeated his gambols and accustomed services. The magistrates all came to the spectacle, by whose arrival, and stay for a while among them, the little community was put to an inconvenient expense. At length the place itself lost its quiet and retirement. It was thought proper, therefore, to prevent this resort to the place, by privately killing the cause of it. And now to what tender strains of compassion, and with what compass and energy of language, you will lament, adorn, and elevate this event. Though, indeed, the fact is so interesting, that it stands in need of neither embellishment nor addition. It will be quite enough to set forth the facts, as they really happened, in their full extent.

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Now and then we meet with a letter of this polished heathen in which a little too much levity is mixed with his morality; yet, in general, it must be admitted that the structure of his mind seems to have been singularly correct, and his senti-

ments to have been governed by a sort of complexional conformity to whatever is most becoming and appropriate in the different relations and allotments of life. He was naturally of a gentle and domestic cast of character, and possessed of a correct sense of what was necessary to social happiness. Virtue had its value with him chiefly in reference to its practical expediency, and as furnishing technical rules for regulating the interchanges of good manners, and good offices; and, if he was inferior to the great moralists of Greece and Rome in the dignity of the foundation on which virtue was established, and the sacred springs from which philosophy deduced its obligations; yet none of the ancients exceeded, or, perhaps, equalled him in his perception of the *verum atque decens*, the *το κατ'οικον* in the common intercourse of life. The following epistle will in some degree illustrate these remarks.

## TO GEMINIUS.

NUMIDIA QUADRATILLA has just departed this life, having nearly attained her eightieth year. Down to the period of her last sickness she was green and flourishing, with a body firm and robust beyond what is usual with her sex. She left behind her a very just and proper will: having disposed of two thirds of her estate to her grandson, and the remainder to her granddaughter. With the granddaughter I am but little acquainted; the grandson, I both well know, and much love; —a youth of rare virtue, and to be loved not only by his relations in blood, but by all in any way connected with him. Though remarkably well favoured, yet living without scandal. A husband under four and twenty years old, and who would have been a father if Providence had permitted. He lived in the house of his grandmother, a gay person, with great strictness of behaviour, and yet with the most dutiful respect. She kept a set of pantomimes, and expended more upon these people than was consistent with her sex and rank. Quadratus was a spectator of these persons neither at the theatre nor at home; nor indeed, was expected so to be. I heard her

say, when she was commending to me the studies pursued by her grandson, that she was accustomed to pass some of that time which ladies have upon their hands in playing at chess, or in looking at the performances of her pantomimes; but that whenever she was amusing herself in either of these ways, she desired her grandson to leave her, and go to his studies; which it seemed to me was done by her not more out of love, than a certain reverence for his character. You will be surprised, as indeed I was, at what I am going to tell you. At the last pontifical games, as we were leaving the theatre together, where we had been entertained with the exhibition of the pantomimes, do you know, said he, this is the first time I ever saw Quadratilla's freed man dance. Such is the grandson. A very different sort of men to do her honour (I am ashamed to call it honour) were in an adulatory manner running about the stage, exulting, applauding, and shouting their applause; and then mimicking the gestures of the performers, and repeating their songs to pay their court to the mistress of the revels. But all they have gained by these arts is a few trifling legacies, which they receive from the heir, who never attended these spectacles. I have written to you this account, because I know you like to hear the news, and because when anything has given me pleasure, I love to renew it by relating it. The affection of the defunct, and the honour done to this excellent young man are circumstances which give me great pleasure. I am glad, also, that the mansion which once belonged to Cassius, who was the founder and chief of the Cassian school, has fallen into the hands of a person no less distinguished than its former possessor. My friend Quadratus will fill it as it ought to be filled; and will bring to it again its pristine dignity and celebrity, by becoming as great an orator as the other was a lawyer.

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Whatever virtuous habits, dispositions, and sentiments could grow and expand under the shade of heathen superstition, disclosed themselves in the writings and intercourse of

the younger Pliny. Even the moral benefits of sickness were understood and felt by his rightly constituted mind. His letter on this subject is very deserving of insertion, as bearing a most creditable testimony to those elements of truth and goodness which distinguished his character; but chiefly as bringing the religion of Pliny into contrast with the Christian religion, where it comes forth in the panoply of its graces and privileges. The refined and contemplative pagan could perceive and understand how the sharp corrective of sickness loosens the hold of this world, and breaks the spell of its enchantments; but where to fix the thoughts thus disengaged: where to lay the burthen down and find rest and refreshment, was intelligence to be drawn from 'a source not within the reach of Pliny or his imperial patron.

## TO MAXIMUS.

THE illness of a friend has lately taught me to think that we are most virtuously disposed in the hour of sickness. Who when in that state is under the influence of avarice or lust? Then neither his appetites nor his ambition enslaves him. He is careless about riches, and however small his possessions, being sensible how soon he must part with them, he feels he has enough. He is then reminded there are Gods, and that he is but a man. He envies no one, he admires no one, he despises no one. He has no interest in or appetite for slanderous reports. He thinks only of baths and fountains. These are the chief objects of his cares and vows. His resolution is, should he recover, to live in ease and quiet, that is, to live harmless and happy. I can lay down both for yourself and myself in a little compass, a rule, which the philosophers make the subject of many words, I may say volumes,—that such as we profess ourselves to be when in sickness, we should endeavour perseveringly to be when in health.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The mind which in sickness is engrossed with thoughts of baths and fountains, and resolves to signalize the restoration to health by a life of ease,



The sorrow of Pliny for the death of Junius Avitus, and the various admirable qualities of the departed youth, form the subject of a truly elegant and affecting letter, well entitled to particular attention for the proof it exhibits of the writer's benevolence, and the homage it pays to extraordinary merit. I would venture to recommend it to the careful perusal of the young especially, as one of the most natural and touching of Pliny's epistles, and inferior to none by the same hand in vivacity and delicacy of expression.

## TO MARCELLINUS.

THE heavy affliction with which the death of Junius Avitus has overwhelmed me has dispersed and broken up all my studies, pursuits, and avocations. It was in my house that he first put on the laticlave, as in all the honours for which he was a candidate he was assisted by my interest. On this account he entertained such an affectionate respect for me, that he adopted me as the guide and regulator of his conduct;—a disposition rarely found in the young men of this day: for where is now the youth to be found who pays the due deference to the age or authority of another? without intermediate steps they are at once wise, at once acquainted with all things; they reverence none, they copy no models; they are their own patterns. Not so Avitus: whose wisdom was principally this, that he thought others wiser than himself;—his principal learning, that he was willing to be taught. He was always consulting his friends concerning his studies or his duties; and came from consulting them a gainer, either by what he learned from them, or by the questions he had the opportunity of submitting to them. What homage he paid to that most correct of men, Servianus! whom, when he

(*molis et pinguis*,) will profit little by the discipline it has undergone. What a cheerless aspect does this present of the pagan on the bed of sickness. With these narrow conceptions of the destiny of man, and the ends of his creation, Pliny was consistent enough in the representations and reasonings of his letter to Trajan on the subject of the Christian converts, in his province of Bithynia.

went as lieutenant from Germany into Pannonia, he attended as tribune, and followed not so much as a brother officer, as a companion, and attendant upon his instructions. With what assiduity and modesty did he discharge the duties of quæstor to the several Consuls under whom he served that office, making himself not more pleasant and agreeable to them than valuable? With what earnestness of application did he solicit this very ædileship, from the possession of which he has been so suddenly snatched away? Which reflexion greatly embitters my sorrow. His unavailing labours, his fruitless solicitations, and the honour which he was permitted only to deserve, are always in my thoughts. That laticlave first put on under my roof; the first and last suffrage I ever gave him; those conversations, those consultations, are again and again occurring to my mind. I am deeply affected by the consideration of his youth, and not less so by reflecting on the loss his family and connexions have sustained. He had an aged parent, a young wife to whom he had been married but a year; a daughter just brought into the world; so many hopes, so many delights, reversed and scattered in a single day! Just appointed ædile, just become a husband, just made a father, he left his promotion untouched, a mother desolate, his wife a widow, an orphan infant, who will never know her grandfather or father. It is an aggravation of my sorrow that being wholly ignorant of the impending calamity, the sickness and decease of my friend came upon me at the same moment, giving me no time for anticipating and preparing for the event. The anguish of my mind would not suffer me to write on any other subject, nor can I at the present moment either think or speak of anything else.

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The instructions given to his friend about to set out to the Roman province of Achaia, of which he had recently been appointed to the government, as proconsul, does great honour to the discernment and feelings of Pliny. The Conquest of Greece was among the last triumphs of the genius of republican

Rome ; and some reverence was yet due to the manes of departed greatness lying buried under a surface on which so many heroes had almost left the print of their footsteps, and which the struggles of rivalry and ambition had covered with the monuments of great achievements in arts and arms, and whatever else belongs to the stimulated growth of irregular greatness. Pliny's respect for a country so renowned in poetry, history, and fable, was natural and becoming in a scholar, who was conscious of the obligations he lay under, as a lover of letters and philosophy, to the models and examples of Greece.

## TO MAXIMUS.

THE love I bear you compels me, not indeed to direct you, for you have no need of a director, but to remind and admonish you to practise carefully what you already know. Reflect that you are sent into the province of Achaia, the true and genuine Greece, where polite learning, and even agriculture itself, are believed to have been first invented ; that you are sent to govern a state consisting of free cities ; to men especially free, who held fast the privilege they received from nature, by their courage, by their superior qualities, by their alliances, and by their fidelity to their engagements. You will revere the Gods, their founders. You will revere their ancient glory, and even their age, which in men is venerable, — in cities sacred. Their antiquity, their illustrious achievements, their very fabulous legends, you will hold in honour. You will abridge nothing of their dignity, nothing of their freedom, nothing even of what flatters their vanity. Keep in your mind the remembrance that this is that country which sent us laws : and that she did not receive them from us as a conquered nation, but furnished them to us in compliance with our request. Remember it is Athens you are approaching ; it is Lacedemon you are about to govern : from whom to take away this last shadow, this last trace and name of liberty, would, indeed, be hard, ferocious, barbarous. You see that physicians, though in their actual treatment of maladies

they make no difference between the servile and the free, yet comport themselves with more courtesy and gentleness of manner towards those of the higher class. Bear in mind what each of these states were in former days ; but let not this consideration induce you to despise them for ceasing to be what once they were. Let all pride and asperity of manner be far removed from you, nor be apprehensive of incurring contempt by kindness. Can he who is invested with the authority of a ruler, and holds the fasces, be an object of contempt, unless he first contemns himself, and by mean and sordid behaviour is the author of his own degradation. It is not by the contumelious treatment of others that power is established. Veneration is not the offspring of terror. Far better will you bring about your objects by love than by fear. Fear retires when you retire, but love remains when your presence is withdrawn. As the one is changed into hatred, so the other is succeeded by veneration. It becomes you, therefore, again and again I repeat it, to consider well the purpose of your appointment, and to revolve with yourself, the nature and magnitude of the task of governing a free state. For what higher political duty can man undertake than that of government, or what is more precious to man than liberty ? What can be more disgraceful than to make government the means of subverting a state, and to substitute slavery in the place of freedom. To these considerations I would add that you have a contest to maintain with yourself. The fame you brought with you from your quæstorship in Bithynia ; the good opinion of your sovereign ; the reputation you acquired as tribune and prætor, and this very government with which you are now invested, and which was bestowed upon you as a reward, all concur to impose upon you a weight of responsibility : the more incumbent it is upon you to prevent its appearing that you exercise in a distant province more humanity, ability, and prudence, than in one nearer to Rome ; in a country of slaves than among a free people. Let it not be said that it was chance, not judgment that sent you to this province ; and that you were a raw and untried man, instead of a person tried and approved. And besides all this, your

acquaintance with men and books must have suggested to you that it is more disgraceful to lose one's reputation, than not to have acquired any. Again I beg to assure you, as I told you at the beginning of this letter, that I have written this to remind and not to direct you. Although I am not afraid of exceeding the due bounds, if I yield to the dictates of affection. For we are in no danger of excess when the feeling can be justified in its fullest extent.

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In the month of September, in the sixth year of the reign of the Emperor Trajan, A.D. 103, between the first and second Dacian war, the younger Pliny, having pronounced in the senate house his celebrated panegyric on the virtues and excellencies of the Emperor, was appointed, as the reward of his loyalty and services, Governor of Pontus and Bithynia, in Asia minor, not merely as a proconsul, but as the lieutenant of his Prince, with special powers; being required not only to examine the public revenues, but to transmit full reports of all particulars within his province, whether relating to civil or religious matters. It was in the discharge of this important office that Pliny forwarded his dispatches relating to the religious novelties introduced by the Christians, who now began to spread their opinions through the greatest part of the Roman world. In the third year of this potent Prince, distinguished by his zeal in the cause of superstition and paganism, we date the third general persecution of the church; and it is remarkable that while Trajan, Pliny, and Tacitus, were looking with disdain and contempt upon the religion of Jesus, the prayers of faith throughout the empire were ascending from the sanctuary to the throne above, and undaunted believers were attesting and sealing with their deaths their participation in that new covenant, whereby all the promises were receiving their completion in the mighty dispensation of grace, which was to take the redeemed of the Lord out of the hands of their enemies.

The aversion with which Christianity was regarded by an Emperor, so renowned for his humanity and wisdom, and the prejudices and alarms which it was beginning to excite, by



threatening the stability of a system so fixed and grounded in the habits of men, so interwoven with their histories, antiquities, and legends, so blended with their highest boasts in arms and arts, and on which the maintenance, the gain, and aggrandisement of such multitudes depended, sufficiently explain the falsities and calumnies with which it was assailed, and the little toleration it found in comparison with other innovations and reforms. It was, however, an æra teeming with the brightest testimonies to the truth. The Apostle John was breathing his expiring exhortations to love and charity. Clement was taking up the mantle of Paul, and Ignatius and Polycarp were supplying the first links of that chain of evidence which has established the identity of the sacred record by an unbroken series of witnesses from its first promulgation to the present hour. Contrary to all human policy and human calculation, the work of twelve poor men of a despised nation was travelling in the greatness of His strength, who can bring might out of weakness, and make all things, whether little or great, proceed according to his own purpose and grace. The gospel of Jesus, within seventy years from his leaving the world, had carried its peaceful victories to the utmost verge of the Roman triumphs.

While Pliny was exercising his government in Bithynia, and Trajan was prosecuting his splendid successes in Dacia, Christianity was establishing itself in its apostolical churches of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, and was mightily working its way through blood and persecution to the fulfilment of its wonderful destiny. In the provinces of Pontus and Bithynia it was making extraordinary progress; and so vast and rapid was the increase, that it became evident that to extirpate it by putting in force for that purpose, the laws of the empire against it, would have been to deluge those provinces in blood, and reduce them almost to a desert. In this extremity it was that the celebrated epistle on the subject, with which we shall close the letters of Pliny, was written by that amiable but erring man to his equally virtuous but mistaking master.

## TO THE EMPEROR TRAJAN.

IT is my custom, and one which I consider of solemn obligation, to refer all my doubts to you: for who is better able to decide me when in perplexity, or to instruct me when ignorant. I have never been present at the trials of Christians, and, therefore, am unacquainted with the nature of the crime, how far it is punishable, or how to proceed in the enquiries concerning it. Nor have I been unperplexed with doubts, whether respect should be had to difference of age; or whether any distinction should be made between those of delicate and those of robust frames; whether repentance should entitle to pardon; or whether it should avail anything to him who had once been a thorough Christian, to desist from his error: whether the name only without any criminal acts, or only the crimes which accompany the profession are to be punished. In the meantime, with respect to those who have been brought before me as Christians, I have observed this course. I first demanded of them whether they were Christians? Upon their confessing themselves to be so, I have put the same question to them a second and a third time, adding threats of punishment. If they have persisted in the same answer, I have ordered them to be led to execution: for I did not doubt that whatever might be the opinions professed by them, a contumacious and inflexible obstinacy was deserving of punishment. Others who were chargeable with the same infatuation, being citizens of Rome, I ordered to be carried thither. While things were in this train, the error, as is usual, spreading further, more descriptions of the same offence occurred. An information was presented to me containing numerous names of accused persons, who, when they came before me, denied that they were, or ever had been Christians, so that when they had repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and offered wine and incense to your statue, which, for that purpose I had ordered to be brought with the images of the gods; and furthermore, had blasphemed the name of Christ;

none of which things, they say, any sincere Christians can be forced to do; I thought it right to discharge them. Others mentioned in the libel, confessed that they were Christians, but presently afterwards denied it; admitting, indeed, that such they had been, but that they had ceased to be so for three years past, others for many years, and some few for so long a period as twenty years. These all worshipped your statue, and the images of the gods, and blasphemed Christ. They affirmed that the whole sum of their guilt, or error, was this—that they were wont upon a set solemn day, to meet together before sun rise, and to sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as a God, and to oblige themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wickedness; but to abstain from theft, robbery, and adultery; to keep faith, and not to deny a deposit when called upon to deliver it up. After which it was their custom to separate, and meet again at a common and harmless meal. Which practice they have laid aside after the publication of my edict forbidding, according to your order, the meeting of any such assemblies. To satisfy myself of the truth of all this, I commanded two maidens, who were said to exercise some ministration or office among them, to be examined by torture. But I discovered nothing but the existence of an absurd and extravagant superstition. And, therefore, desisting from any further process, I have betaken myself to you for advice; as the case seemed to be worthy of consultation, considering the great numbers involved in the peril; for many of every rank and either sex are and will be called in question on this account. The contagion of this superstition which has overspread, not only cities, but towns and country villages, still seems possible to be stopped and corrected. It certainly does now appear that the temples which were nearly deserted, have begun to be frequented; that the holy solemnities, long neglected, are now revived; and that the victims for sacrifice begin to be sold; which could till now rarely find a purchaser. So that it is easy to imagine what multitudes might be reclaimed, if place be allowed for repentance.

## TRAJAN TO PLINY.

You have proceeded in a proper manner, my Secundus, in examining the cases of those who have been brought before you for being Christians : for it is impossible to lay down any certain and general rule for acting in all causes of this nature. Let them not be sought for, but if they be accused and convicted, let them be punished, with this qualification, however, that if any one denies himself to be a Christian, and shall make it clearly appear that he is not by invoking our gods, although he may have heretofore been suspected, let him be pardoned upon his repentance. As for libels published, without the accuser's name, they ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort. For that would be an ill precedent, and not agreeable to the practice of our reign.

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The Emperor's answer to Pliny's letter on the subject of the prosecutions of the Christians, though vehemently censured by Tertullian, as inconsistent and absurd, did very much tend to save them from the fury of their enemies, and to abate the rigour of the persecution. It discouraged the detestable infliction of torture, to extort confession and discovery, and put a stop to the iniquity of anonymous and secret accusations. The religious prejudices and ignorance of Trajan were to be lamented and despised ; but when these unhappy consequences of the false views and notions in which he had been trained and confirmed are admitted and commiserated, it can not be denied, that considering the intimate connexion between the polity and religion of Rome, and the maxim of the government that no unlicensed assemblies of the people were to be allowed, the Emperor had certainly a warrant in the laws and usages of the empire, and the necessities of the state, as it was constituted and upheld on its existing basis, for opposing the introduction of a foreign worship, and the doctrines and ceremonies of a new religion. The Christian reli-

gion was destined to be tried as silver is tried, and to pass through the furnace of affliction to that bright ascendancy in which it was finally to come forth ; to owe its prevalence to its discomfitures ; and to mount upwards in contradiction to the mass and momentum of the passions, prejudices, and depravity of the world. The opposition of Trajan was of no detriment to the progress of the great cause ; but his condemnation of its primitive professors, and the cruel martyrdoms to which he gave the imperial sanction, have left a stain upon his memory not to be effaced by the splendour of his Dacian victories, or saved from execration by any political necessities, or any plausible precedents of government.

With these specimens the English reader will, perhaps, be able to form an estimate of the merit of Pliny's letters. Cicero's appear to have been Pliny's model. Thus he writes to Regulus,—*Est mihi cum cicerone æmulatio ; nec sum contentus eloquentia sæculi nostri.* Cicero had an advantage in the weight of his matter, as well as in the vigour and compass of his diction ; and in his day the latin language was at its highest point of perfection. Pliny, however, can hardly be said to have been excelled by Cicero in the light and playful properties of the familiar epistle, in the sprightly commerce of scholarship, or in those *epistolæ umbraticæ* which are the substitute for easy and friendly conversation. His letter-writing is referred to by Erasmus as a good example of the *stylus negligentiusculus*, or what he afterwards better expresses by *negligentia delicens*, since he allows the style of Pliny's letters to be acute, elegant, and, though in a domestic idiom, yet sufficiently chaste and polished.

In his first letter, which seems to be meant as a sort of preface, he enters into the wish expressed by his friend, that his letters should be collected for publication.



## CHAPTER XVI.

LETTER WRITING FROM THE TIME OF PLINY TO THE  
TIME OF PHILOSTRATUS.

THERE are many proofs of a prevailing relish among the latter Romans, for the graces of epistolary writing. It continued to be generally regarded as a convenient channel for the intercourse of taste, wit, and learning, as well as for the commerce of friendship, business, and domestic intercourse. Not many specimens, however, from the time of Pliny to the reign of Septimius Severus have come down to us to attest the success with which the practice was cultivated during that interval, about a century in duration.

Philostratus, who assumed so much credit as a judge in this matter, and who wrote the life of Apollonius Tyaneus, has mentioned him as one of the best composers of epistles. We have a few of the letters ascribed to him transmitted to us. He was by profession a Pythagorean philosopher, born at Tyana, a city in Cappadocia, about the beginning of the Christian æra. There is much to convict him of being a gross impostor. The task of transcribing and adorning the narrative was assigned by the Empress Julia, the wife of Septimius Severus, to the Sophist Philostratus, and the office of imparting embellishment to the story was so liberally understood by Philostratus, that he appears to have given the utmost freedom to his pen in the execution of it. There is, indeed, so much of the extravagance of invention and fiction in all that regards this character, that some have even doubted whether there ever was such a person: but the collateral evidence concerning him, coupled with the narrative of Philostratus, so substantiates this fact, that we cannot reasonably dispute that the subject of the inflated account of Philostratus did exist,

and that he was a philosopher of the Pythagorean sect, who visited most parts of the civilized world, as a teacher and lecturer in the most abstruse sciences, and a very successful pretender to supernatural powers. Such, indeed, was the homage he attracted, and the success with which he practised his arts of imposition, that he was not only regarded, in his life-time, as an extraordinary being, but long after his death he continued to be worshipped as a god. Some epistles, and his "Apology to Domitian," are all that remain of his writings. The epistles have, in general, a brevity and freshness in their style and sentiments, which give them at least the air of being genuine. A few shall be produced as specimens.

APOLLONIUS TO HISTIÆUS HIS BROTHER.

How surprising it is, that when other mortals think me to be equal to a God, and some to be really a God, my own country, for whose sake I first sought celebrity, should be to this hour ignorant of what my claims really are. It is not, as I perceive, fully known and admitted, even by my own brothers, that I am superior to men in general, in my life and my discourses. Could you think so meanly of my understanding as to suppose me not to have known from the first, those things respecting my country and kinsmen, which are so plain that not even the most ignorant require to be taught them. Nor need I be told how correct and noble it is, to look upon the whole world as one's country, and all men as brothers and friends, since all derive their existence from God, are of one and the same nature, and possess in common the same speech and affections. Whencesoever any one may come, or wheresoever he may be born, whether barbarian or Greek, still he is man. But yet there are certain affinities of a special and appropriate kind which attract men to their several homes and kindred; feelings that will have their influence, however we may reason on the subject. Thus the Ulysses of Homer preferred Ithaca to the immortality proffered him by the goddess. And I see the same law prevailing among the brute

creation. For a bird does not find repose out of its own proper nest. And a fish, if forcibly turned in a contrary direction to its destined course, will not yield the point, but will return to it. The wild beast will not, though satiated with food, consent to lodge out of its proper resting place. Man has been, indeed, so constituted by nature, as to aspire to the appellation of wise ; and although all the rest of the earth were to supply him with whatever else he wanted, yet no other but his own land could shew him the monuments of his ancestors.

## THE SAME TO HIS BROTHER.

If philosophy be, in truth, the most excellent and precious of all things, and we have in good faith and sincerity become philosophers, no one can justly suspect me of having sacrificed my affection for my brothers to a base and ungenerous motive. I say this, because it appears that this suspicion supposes me to be influenced by a regard to money, when even before I took upon me to sustain the character of a philosopher, I had begun to look upon riches with contempt. So that it would have been more just and reasonable to impute my silence to some other cause. I am anxious to avoid two consequences, either to seem to be too self-important by writing the truth, or meanly to flatter by disguising it. To appear in either of these lights to one's brothers and friends, is equally to be deprecated. Perhaps fortune may permit me, when I shall have visited my friends at Rhodes, to come from thence to you at the end of the spring.

## TO EUPHRATES.

I DECLARE myself a friend to the philosophers, whereas for the sophists and grammarians, and whatever miserable kinds of persons like these there may be, I have no regard, nor ever shall have. With the sophists and grammarians you have no concern yourself unless you are one of them ; with the other you have a great concern, for their precepts are everything to

you. Control, therefore, your affections, and labour to acquire wisdom, nor allow yourself to regard the wise and philosophical with invidious sentiments ; for remember, that old age and death are at hand.

TO THE SAME.

YOUR children will want but little if they are the true children of a philosopher. It is not, therefore, a worthy object of solicitude to acquire for them more than what is sufficient, especially if there is any sacrifice of honour accompanying the acquisition. But if the thing is done, and wealth has been acquired, then the next thing to be thought of is to be careful to distribute a portion of this accumulation to others. And to remember that you have a country and friends.

TO THE SAME.

OF the discourses of Epicurus, that which he has written concerning pleasure stands in no need of any defender either from the garden or the school, for what he says on that subject is admitted to be most true in the stoa ; but if you wish for a contradiction of the dogmas and discipline of the school of Chrysippus, it is written for you in royal characters. Euphrates has again and again accepted what Epicurus would never accept.

TO THE SAME.

I ENQUIRED of some rich men whether there was any limit to their thirst of accumulation, and the answer was, there was none. I further asked what was the cause of this craving. They laid the blame on the unsatisfactoriness of riches. I said to them, Blame not riches, but yourselves, O miserable men, who have become wealthy without experience.

TO THE NOBLES OF THE CITY OF CESAREA.

IN the first place is to be considered, the need which all mortals have of the assistance of the gods in all their undertak-

ings and concerns; and therefore their first obligation is to them. Cities are entitled to their next consideration and regard, and every man of good understanding and virtue will make the happiness of states the principal object of his care. But where it is not only the case of a city, but of the greatest city in Palestine, and the most distinguished by its magnitude, laws, and pursuits, its bravery in the field, its social and peaceful virtues, all which may be said of your city, beyond all others admired and respected by me, and I think deserving to be so, not only by every man of an upright and sound mind, but by every man of common sense, and capable of comparing it with others,—if such a state condescends to bestow honours upon an individual man, and him a foreigner, separated at such a distance from it, what adequate compensation can the man so honoured make in return? he can only, perhaps, if he is a pious person, pray to the gods for blessings upon that city; and he may hope his prayers may be successful. This I purpose doing for you. It is a pleasure to contemplate the refined humanity of the Greeks, who proclaim to the world, in their public documents, the virtues of individuals. As the most suitable return for the special honour you have conferred upon me, I will endeavour to render Apollonius, the son of Aphorisius, a youth of the most powerful genius, and worthy of his name as a citizen of Cæsarea, of real value and utility to his country, if fortune favours my design.

## TO SCOPELIANUS THE SOPHIST.

THESE are, in all, five kinds or characters of style in composition—the philosophic, the historic, the forensic, the epistolary, and that which is adapted to commentaries. If we distinguish these separate departments, and arrange them under their different heads, with a view to determine which is the properest style to be used in each, we shall see that the best is that which is most the writer's own, being the genuine product and suggestion of his own genius and talent. The next best is that which consists in imitating the best, where the writer is



defective in original powers. What is really the best style, absolutely considered, is the result of much mental effort. Therefore, where that cannot be attained to, the style natural to the writer, and properly his own, is generally the most vigorous and powerful.

TO LESBONACTUS.

MANLINESS best becomes us in poverty, but in wealth humanity.<sup>1</sup>

TO CRITO.

It was a saying of Pythagoras, that medicine was of all arts the most godlike. Let it prove itself to be so by its making the mind, together with the body, the object of its care. Otherwise our more excellent part would want help in sickness.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ELIS AND OLYMPIA.

You invite me to be present at the Olympic games, and you are good enough to send messengers to me for that purpose. Come, I certainly would, to witness the contentions of the body, if in so doing I were not leaving the greater spectacle of contending virtue.

TO THE NOBLES OF SELEUCIS.

THAT city which pays to men of worth the same kind of deference with which it approaches deity, may be called happy. In such a state virtue is encouraged and illustrated. To take the lead in the intercourse of beneficence is not difficult, though it is that which is the most admirable ambition. But to make a return upon a par with the benefit received, is not only not easy, but exceeds the power of man.

<sup>1</sup> Both the Greek and Latin languages have terms to express the distinction and contrast imported in this pithy observation of Apollonius, which our language does not possess. The Greek of Apollonius runs thus :—*Δει πρὸς πένεσιν ὡς ἀνδρά, πλουτέειν δὲ ὡς ἀνθρώπων*. In paupertate quidem ut virum divitiis vero ut hominem versari oportet.

For that which is second in the order of time, can never be upon a level with that which belongs to the first mover in the interchange of benefits. So that to be upon a parity with those who have not in words only, but in verity and in deed, done us essential good, we must call heaven to our assistance, as it is above the ability of men. Your invitation to me to come among you, proceeds from your benevolence and generosity towards me, which is met on my part by an equal alacrity in accepting the summons. The messengers you have sent upon this occasion, are doubly welcome, as being my personal friends.

## TO EUPHRATES.

I AM often asked, and by yourself among others, how it happens that I am not sent for into Italy ; or if invited, why I do not repair thither. To the first interrogation I shall give no answer, as I would not be thought either to know the reason, or to care about it. As to the second, what other answer does it become me to give, than that I would rather be sent for than go.

## TO THE ROMAN QUESTORS.

You exercise a high command. If you know how to rule, how happens it that the cities under your government are in a declining state. If you know not how to rule, it becomes you first to learn, and then to rule.

## TO THE RULERS OF ASIA.

WHAT signifies lopping trees that throw out noxious branches, if the roots are left.

## TO THE LEARNED FREQUENTERS OF THE MUSEUM

I HAVE visited Argos, Phocis, Locris, Sicyon, and Megara, and formerly I was accustomed to hold disputations, and to lecture, in those places. I have left off the practice. Do you ask why ? Take, or let the Muses take this answer. I am become a Barbarian : not only while absent from Greece, but while in Greece itself.

## TO HISTIÆUS.

VIRTUE and riches are things not only differing from each other, but mutually repugnant. The increase of the one is the decrease of the other, and so inversely. How then can the one consist with the other in the same person; unless I am addressing one, who, in his foolish judgment, blends the two things together. Do not permit such persons to mistake us, or to class us with the rich rather than with the wise. It is, indeed, very disgraceful to make long journeys for the acquisition of wealth, when to be remembered by posterity many deem it too much to pay to virtue the slightest homage, or even to salute her as they pass.

## TO VESPASIAN.

You have reduced Greece, they say, under your dominion; and you think that you have greater possessions than Xerxes. But you do not know that you have less than Nero, for Nero could afford to throw away some of his empire. Nero when at play gave the Greeks their liberty. You have in good earnest, and with great effort, brought them under the yoke.\*

\* This alludes to the ridiculous figure made by Nero at the Olympic games. Suetonius thus relates the incident. The Greek cities in which contests in music were publicly celebrated were in the habit of sending to Nero all the crowns obtained by the victors in these combats; on which occasions he received the messengers with great honour and distinction, gave them audience, and admitted them at his table. Being requested by them, at one of these entertainments to sing, he complied, and being extravagantly applauded, he declared that the Greeks only had a good ear for harmony, and that they were alone worthy of him and his talents. So pleased was he with the compliments he had received, that he resolved upon a visit to Greece, and forthwith set out upon the expedition. Landing at Cassiopea on the coast of Epirus, he proceeded immediately to the altar of Jupiter Cassus and commenced singing. He next repaired to Olympia, and though the games there were held at certain intervals, he ordered them to be all celebrated in one year, and some to be repeated several times. Contrary to usage he directed the contest in music to be added to the other games. When the Prince sung, no one

## TO PHRUCIANUS.

YOUR letters have given me great satisfaction. They were full of the friendship and familiarity which should season the intercourse of relations, and remind them of their common descent. They have convinced me that you are desirous of seeing me, as I am also of seeing you. As soon as I can I will come to you. You will, therefore, wait for me where you now are. But when I come, I shall expect that you will devote yourself to conversation and intercourse with me in preference to all your other friends and acquaintance, as it will be highly becoming in you to do.

TO HIS BROTHER APOLLONIUS, CONSOLING HIM FOR  
THE LOSS OF HIS WIFE.

IT is the appointment of Nature that every individual after having fulfilled his destiny here takes his leave of this earth; and old age usually closes the scene. After which he vacates his place, and disappears.

Let it not afflict you so sorely that your wife is taken from you in the flower of her age. Nor when death is the subject, suppose that life is always to be preferred to it, since wise

was permitted on any account to leave the theatre, where they were detained so long, and such was the fatigue and lassitude occasioned by the heat and tediousness of the performance, that, the doors being all shut, many escaped by dropping from the wall, and some feigned themselves dead, that they might be carried out to their friends. In performing a part in a tragedy he once dropped his sceptre, at which he was greatly dispirited and alarmed, but was composed again on being assured by one of the actors, that the plaudits and acclamations of the people hindered the accident from being observed. He contended also in the chariot race, and having undertaken one drawn by ten horses, he was thrown out, and being replaced, found himself unable to endure the concussions of the vehicle: he was nevertheless crowned as victor. Before leaving Greece he made a solemn donation of liberty from the Roman yoke to the entire province, and complimented the judges with the privilege of Roman citizens and a large sum of money: which grant and bounty he himself proclaimed from the stadium with his own voice.

men have, on weighing well the question, determined the contrary. Shew yourself to be my brother; the near kinsman of a philosopher; of the family of Pythagoras and Apollonius. I recommend you to form a fresh matrimonial connexion. If you had no fault to find with your former marriage, why refuse to engage in another similar connexion. If to her life's end she whom you have lost was a chaste and loving companion, and worthy of all honour, why should we not cherish the hope and expectation of another deserving to take her place? It is even probable that a future wife may be excited by the example of her predecessor to go even beyond her in zeal and prudence. Let the state of your brothers be a consideration of weight with you; the eldest having never yet married, and the youngest, though cherishing the natural hopes of posterity, yet liable to the casualties which time may interpose. We are three sprung from one, and from us three not one has yet proceeded. The same uncertainty impends over the fate of our country, and those who should come after us. If we have advanced in our attainments beyond our father, why may we not hope that those who shall spring from us, may be better than ourselves. May those receive their existence from us to whom we may give our names, as our ancestors have done. My tears render me unable to write more, and, indeed, I have nothing to say which seems more necessary to be urged, on the present occasion, than what I have above suggested.

#### TO THE SENATE AND PEOPLE OF TYANA.

I FEEL I ought to obey when you desire me to return to you; for it reflects equal credit upon the Republic and the individual, when for the sake of doing him honour it sends for one of its absent citizens. And here I may be allowed to say, though it may be thought boastful, that, during the time consumed in my travels, I have acquired glory and fame; and the friendship of renowned cities and illustrious men. But if you deem yourselves worthy of something greater and more emi-



ment, all my powers and abilities, such as they are, shall be exerted to give you satisfaction.

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Such are some of the letters said to have been written by this man of wonder-working memory, without doubt an extraordinary person, and possessed of a remarkable genius for imposing upon mankind. Kingdoms and commonwealths, as well as the most distinguished men, were ambitious of the honour of his friendship. The circumstances, which gave occasion to the account of Apollonius by Philostratus, are sufficient of themselves to bring the performance under suspicion; being undertaken at the suggestion of a heathen empress, with the evident design of setting up, in the supernatural performances ascribed to the heathen philosopher, a counter-testimony to the evangelical record of the miracles of our blessed Saviour: but the internal evidence is so condemnatory of the work as to leave no doubt of its being a tissue of gross and impudent falsehoods. The parallel maintained throughout the whole fabrication, with the course of the Gospel narrative, shews it to have been a palpable contrivance of the enemies of our faith to disparage the proofs on which the Christian verities repose, by inflating, to the same magnitude, the wonders attributed to the pagan impostor. For the extraordinary achievements of this vain philosopher, we have only the authority of Philostratus, who wrote his history long after the subject of it had been withdrawn. There was, it appears, a life of Apollonius written by one Mæragenes, as we learn from Origen;<sup>2</sup> but, as Mæragenes happened to treat Apollonius as a magician and impostor, it did not suit the purpose of the sophist to adopt or recognise his authority. Nor, indeed, does he pretend to derive his facts from any credible source, but partly from rumour and hearsay, and partly from the account handed to him by the Empress Julia, who was told by somebody not named, that it was furnished by one Damis, a com-

<sup>2</sup> Contr. Cels. l. vii. 102.

panion of Apollonius, first introduced to the world upon this occasion. The whole story has, in fact, no other voucher but Philostratus himself,—a voluptuary in sentiment; a sophist by profession; and a notorious forger of falsities in support of his own opinions.

At the end of the epistolary productions collected by Aldus and Cujacius we find a letter of Musonius which merits our regard by the solid and substantial worth of its instructions. It seems there were two Musonius's, both celebrated teachers, and experiencing at the hand of the Emperor Nero a similar ill treatment, but differing in their scholastic tenets and connexions, the one being a Cynic, and the other a Stoic, and very ardent disseminator of the principles of that sect. This last-mentioned philosopher, whose entire designation was Caius Musonius Rufus, was by birth of the equestrian order, a prefect of the public fortifications and military works, and possessed of various knowledge and acquirements. His attainments and general respectability made Nero his enemy, and caused him to be banished to Gyaros, a small island among the sporades in the Ægean sea, which, in the time of the Emperors of Rome, was often used as a place of exile. Being recalled by Vespasian, he renewed his studies and instructions at Rome, with so large a share of the imperial favour, that when the philosophers were expelled from Italy, he alone was permitted to remain. His precepts were remarkable for their adaptation to the substantial interests and practical benefits of society, and these precepts he is said to have illustrated and confirmed by his own correct example.

Of Musonius the Cynic there exists but a scanty and uncertain account. We have some intelligence concerning a Musonius, who probably was the Cynic philosopher, in the Sixteenth chapter of the fourth book of the marvellous Life of Apollonius, by Philostratus. At the end of his foolish story of the damsel restored to life by his hero, there is a short correspondence between him and Musonius, then in prison under an edict of Nero, forbidding philosophers to exercise their profession in Rome. The four short letters which passed

between them according to Philostratus were in the following regular epistolary form.

APOLLONIUS TO MUSONIUS.

I AM desirous of coming to you, to be under the same roof, and to discourse with you; and to afford you what assistance I can. If you have no doubt that I can accomplish as much as Hercules when he delivered Theseus from hell, signify in writing what you wish me to do. Farewell.

MUSONIUS TO APOLLONIUS.

FOR what you meditate and propose, you are entitled to praise. But he who expects to clear himself from the crime he is charged with, by establishing his innocence, will be able to deliver himself.

APOLLONIUS TO MUSONIUS.

SOCRATES, the Athenian, when he refused to be liberated from prison by his friends, proceeded to trial, and yet was put to death.

MUSONIUS TO APOLLONIUS.

SOCRATES died because he prepared no defence for himself, but it is my intention to defend myself.

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Such is the rapid interlude inserted by Philostratus in the lying legend of the achievements of Apollonius. The letter, which appears at the end of the collections of Aldus and Cujacius, was probably written by or for Caius Musonius Rufus the Stoic philosopher, respecting whom some particulars have been mentioned. We meet with this Musonius in more than one place in Tacitus, occupying a position very creditable to his character, and I believe it is to this Musonius that, among other just reflections, is to be assigned the following much celebrated aphorism. "If you perform anything good with labour, the labour vanishes, but the good remains: if you do a

base thing with delight, the delight vanishes and the disgrace remains."<sup>4</sup> I am induced by the respect due to the author of so wise a proposition to lay before the reader a portion of his letter.

MUSONIUS TO PANCRACTIDA.

BEING led to infer both from the reports which reach me concerning you, and from the letters which you yourself send to your children, that your views of philosophy are not what the vulgar entertain, but such as are more consonant to your quality and character, I deem it right to offer you my present congratulations, and my future wishes and prayers, that their thoughts may never be turned in any other direction, and that the resolutions which they have now formed they may maintain to the end of their lives, thus making the best return to you for the benefits you will have conferred on them. As there are two principal means whereby the course of this life is best regulated, prudence and self-government, how is it possible for us to do our duty towards ourselves or others while we couple in our characters ignorance with intemperance. To advance therefore in philosophy our minds must be in a state of freedom from these obstructions. The true end of our being born into this world is to live under the restraints of moderation and virtue; our minds being furnished by nature with reason and intelligence as governors and guides for this purpose. Our only way of being cured of folly and intemperance is to put ourselves under the remedies which

<sup>4</sup> Ἄν τι πράξης καλὸν μετὰ πόνου, ὃ μὲν πόνος οἰχεται, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μένει. ἂν τι ποιήσης αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ οἰχεται, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μένει. Aul. Gell. Noct. Att. L. xvi. c. 1. Aulus Gellius takes notice of a remarkable coincidence between the celebrated aphorism of Musonius and a sentiment which fell from the lips of Cato, in an oration pronounced by him when with his army in Numantia, which, as being of older date, he says, is more entitled to veneration. "Cogitate cum animis vestris, si quid vos per laborem recte feceritis, labor ille a vobis cito recedet; bene factum a vobis, dum vivetis non abscedet: sed si qua per voluptatem nequiter feceritis, voluptas cito abibit, nequiter factum illud apud vos semper manebit."

reason supplies. This in a manner goes before us, and whatever in our original dispositions is disorderly and corrupt, our depraved judgments and inward perversity, this roots out from the mind, while it introduces a new health into the bosom, and strengthens what is weak within us. These principles, after they have thus received this accession of strength and firmness, point to the way of duty through our whole lives, and what we feel to be right and reasonable is thus made to be in harmony with our inclinations.

While you not only set before you, but actually carry on this medicinal treatment of the soul, what skill can you call in, more effectual than your own, for promoting the welfare of your children ; for must it not be the great object of your solicitude as a father, and that for which you would undergo anything, that you may see your children classed among the good ? Is it not for this that you have given them existence, and have made them the continual subject of your prayers ? If you are anxious for them to become thus virtuous and honourable, will you not desire to see them restraining themselves in their food and drink, and in all their natural appetites, content with a limited portion of sleep, and clothed in plain attire, simple and sufficient for protection and covering ? You would desire to see them with a countenance and gait so marked by modesty and discretion, as that no one may dare in their sight to do or utter anything indecorous ; and so full of energy as to be ready, when they wish or feel it expedient, to put forth all their strength in the fulfilment of the great design of their creation. Would you not wish that, elevating their views to the highest objects, human and divine, they may comport themselves towards the gods with piety and sanctity, and towards men with justice and integrity. Though you are a parent, yet if you are wise, you would wish your children to prefer their country to their parents ; their parents to their kindred and friends. And you will consider the honour of a parent greatly concerned in reprehending and expostulating with those among their kindred, if any are leading others astray. You will wish also to see your children thankful for



the kind offices you have done them, and retaining them in grateful remembrance. They must requite the old services of their parents with new benefits as the only mode of payment, and be ready to defend them at all hazards, if even necessity should require the sacrifice of life itself in their cause. It is their duty to bear with meekness the anger of their parents, though it should vent itself not only in words, but in blows and wounds, and although it should proceed from passion rather than reason; and in such a case to be more afraid for their parents than themselves, lest they should do anything unbecoming their characters. What, indeed, would you yourselves not undergo that you might be persuaded that your children were destined to live together all their lives in family concord and harmony with all related to them, following the same studies and recreations. Unless you are desirous that these qualities shall exist in the minds of your children so as to raise them above the fear of death, labour, and human opinion, they will be liable to be agitated and carried to and fro like the servile vulgar, when any evil, however contemptible, comes upon them. Our forefathers more easily surmounted these common ills, than we, from a certain perversity of nature, are able to do. Surely you would be very sorry to see a principle grow up in your children's minds that would dispose them to make money the measure of all things, and to sacrifice all their nearest ties and connexions to the accumulation of wealth; or to be desirous of possessing more than necessity, and the support of themselves and those depending upon them, required; rather should they learn to despise all that superfluous wealth, by which men are impelled to the commission of many public and private acts, by which they bring disgrace upon themselves. Should not the object of our ambition rather be to attain to the dignity of exercising command, and dispensing law according to the rules and principles of justice.—Therefore, O Pancretida, resolve not only to permit but to exhort and encourage your children to cultivate philosophy, and to educate them in the fearless habit of expressing suitably and boldly their

opinions. If you thus proceed in their education, you will be justified in saying to all those related to you that you have not only introduced to them children, but such children; and to your country, that you have not merely added to the number of its citizens, but that you have given to it good and virtuous citizens.

Hadrian,<sup>5</sup> the immediate successor of Trajan, appears to have been a prince of extraordinary abilities; and, if we credit what is related of him by his biographers, especially by *Ælius Spartianus*, he was all-accomplished, (*in omnibus artibus peritissimus*) though his literary judgment is brought into some doubt by his alleged preference of *Ennius* to *Virgil*, *Cæcilius* to *Sallust*, and his favourite *Antimachus* to *Homer* and *Plato*. He was the most excursive and various traveller among the ancient professors of letters and philosophy; and, considering his extensive intercourse with the learned men of his time, it is rather remarkable that little or nothing of his familiar correspondence has been preserved; especially as the care of his letters formed a regular department in the arrangements of the imperial household, entrusted to *Heliodorus*,<sup>6</sup> (*qui ab epistolis fuit*) a person in great repute for wisdom, and, as some say, the associate of *Epictetus*. There are extant, however, two or three letters imputed to Hadrian, which are interesting; and, among others, a very pretty greek epistle to his mother, which we find in a note of *Casaubon* to the life of this prince, by *Ælius Spartianus*. It is in the terms following.

<sup>5</sup> The name of this Emperor is always Hadrian on his coins. When the name occurs in Greek, it is usually *Ἀδριανός*, leni spiritu, with a soft breathing.

<sup>6</sup> *Salmasius* rather thinks, that not this *Heliodorus*, but another of that name, was the friend of *Epictetus*; and that the *Heliodorus* here spoken of, as presiding over the correspondence department, was the Emperor's freedman, to whom somebody said, "ὅτι Καίσαρ χρημᾶτα μὲν σοὶ καὶ τιμὴν δύναιτο δύναιτο, ῥήτορα δὲ οὐ ποιεῖναι οὐ δύναιτο." *Cæsar* may, indeed, give you wealth and honour, but he cannot make you a rhetorician.

*Favorinus*, too, was a special friend of Hadrian, whose good sense was

## HADRIAN TO HIS MOTHER.

I GIVE you joy, my most excellent and revered mother. Your prayers for me are returned on my part by prayers equally earnest for you. Your piety and sanctity of life must give much efficacy to your supplications. I do indeed rejoice that you are so pleased with my conduct, and deem it so worthy of commendation. You know, mother, that this day is my birthday,—a day on which our family ought to sup together. If it is agreeable to you, therefore, come early, with my sisters, that we may the longer together enjoy your company. Sabina has been obliged to go into the country, but she has sent to us the usual little contributions<sup>7</sup> to our feast. Do not delay to come to us, that we may unite our vows and supplications.<sup>8</sup>

From Eusebius, it appears, that the Christians suffered much from their heathen oppressors in the reign of Hadrian; but chiefly from the Rulers of Provinces, and the unrestrained fury of the common people. In these sad circumstances an appeal was made to the Emperor by some Christians of eminent courage and piety, in behalf of their persecuted brethren; among whom were Quadratus, bishop of Athens, and Aristides, a Christian philosopher of the same city. If these men by their writings and discourses were not able to make Hadrian a Christian, they did, at least, bring him to see and acknow-

shewn in his reply to one who blamed him for submitting to the Emperor's correction of a word which he (Favorinus) had used in conversing with him. "Your counsel is not judicious. You do not perceive that a man with thirty legions at his command must have the better in argument."

<sup>7</sup> *σπερίδα*, munuscula, birth-day presents. The primary sense of *σπερίδα* is a basket, but in a secondary or metonymical sense, it means, the little delicacies in the basket.

<sup>8</sup> On their birth-days the Romans offered up their vows and supplications for their own health and that of their friends; *eumque diem cognati et propinqui communi religione concelebrabant*.

ledge the cruelty and disgrace of abandoning to the mercy of prejudiced magistrates and a furious populace, so large a part of the subjects of his empire. Orders were issued for a more equitable and moderate treatment of the Christians, and we have the Emperor's letters on this occasion to Minutius Fundanus, the proconsul of Asia, in the following terms.

## HADRIAN TO MINUTIUS FUNDANUS, PROCONSUL.

I HAVE received a letter from Serenius Granianus, your eminent predecessor; and I think the matter of that letter is not such as should be passed over without due enquiry; as it is my desire that the Christians may not, without cause, be disquieted, nor informers have occasion and encouragement given them for false accusations. If the subjects of our provinces can openly appear to their indictments against the Christians, let them take that course, and not proceed against them with mere noise and clamour. If any accusation be preferred, it is proper that you should have it brought under your cognizance as proconsul. If any one shall bring a regular charge against these Christians, and it is proved that they have transgressed the laws, give sentence against them according to the quality of the offence proved; but if he shall appear to have brought it only out of spite and malice, take care to punish that person according to the wickedness of so malignant a purpose.

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In consequence of the above letter, the persecution of the Christians ceased, after it had continued about a year and a half; and the Emperor's good humour with the Christians was such that it was said he entertained the design of building a temple to Christ, and to receive him into the number of the gods. He commanded temples to be built everywhere without images, which were, as long as the command was enforced, distinguished by the name of Hadriani; but

the order appears to have been withdrawn upon its being represented to the Emperor, that the oracle had said, in answer to those who had consulted it, that if this course was persisted in, the pagan temples would be deserted, and all men would become Christians.

Another Epistle of this active Emperor is interesting, especially at this juncture, as tending to shew the instability of the Egyptian character.<sup>9</sup>

#### HADRIAN TO SERVIANUS.

THE Egyptians, whom you are pleased to commend to me, I know thoroughly from a close observation, to be a light, fickle, and inconstant people, changing with every turn of fortune. The Christians among them are worshippers of Serapis, and those calling themselves bishops of Christ scruple not to act as the votaries of that God. The truth is, there is no one, whether Ruler of a synagogue, or Samaritan, or Presbyter of the Christians,<sup>10</sup> or mathematician, or astrologer, or magician, that does not do homage to Serapis. The Patriarch himself, when he comes to Egypt, is by some compelled to worship Serapis, and by others, Christ.<sup>11</sup> It is a race

<sup>9</sup> The connexion of France with Egypt is not more a subject of suspicion and apprehension now, than it was at the period to which our attention is drawn. When Saturninus, the general of Aurelian, which Saturninus was born in France, was invested with a high Asiatic command, it was stipulated that he should not visit, nor hold any intercourse with Egypt; as that sagacious Emperor wisely foresaw, that if the restless disposition of a Gaul should come into coalition with the Egyptian character, no less irritable and unstable, a commotion might ensue which would throw the world into confusion.

<sup>10</sup> Videntur multi Christianorum Ægyptiorum, ad Hadrianum adventum aut mutasse religionem, aut intermissa ejus professione, ad tempus dissimulasse; quæ res occasionem illi præbuit ea scribendi de Ægyptiorum etiam in religione levitate, quæ hic legimus. Satis constat ex historia ecclesiastica acciderisse hoc non raro in ea provincia. Exemplo sit, quod scriptum est in veteri martyrologio in historia de Epimacho Martyre Ægyptuo. Casaubon in Not. ad Vopisc. de Saturnino.

<sup>11</sup> It does not seem that Hadrian, traveller as he was, exercised a very cau-



of men, of all the most seditious, vain and mischievous. The state is powerful, rich, and abounding, and of so active a disposition, that no one is allowed to live without occupation. Some are glass-blowers, some paper-makers, some weavers of thread. All are professors of some one art or other. The blind, and those who have the gout in their feet or hands, find something to do. There is one God whom all worship (Serapis) both Christians, Jews, and Gentiles. I wish this place maintained a better character, worthy of its rank as the first city<sup>12</sup> in Egypt. I have made great and liberal grants to it. I have restored to it its ancient privileges; I have laid it under much obligation by immediate benefits; and after all, as soon as I had left this people, they began to calumniate my son Verus, and I reckon you have heard what they have said concerning Antoninus. I wish them no further harm, than that they may live upon their own chickens, hatched on their own dunghills, according to that disgusting practice of theirs, which it is disagreeable even to allude to.

I have sent you some of those variegated cups<sup>13</sup> so remarkable for their diversity of colors, in different lights, which were given to me by a priest of the temple, and are now dedicated to you and my sister, which I wish you to exhibit when you entertain your friends on festal days. Take care they do

nous enquiry into facts. Although he had discovered the levity of the people of Egypt, and how unworthy they were of credit, he seems to have credulously listened to what their hatred both of Jews and Christians induced them to represent concerning them. He talks of the Patriarch's occasional visits to Alexandria; whereas it is well known that he held his fixed residence there. That the Patriarch, whether Justus, or his successor Eumenes, was compelled by violence to do some outward homage to Serapis may be near the truth, but that he was made *against his will* to pay adoration to Christ, is not to be credited.

<sup>12</sup> Alexandria.

<sup>13</sup> Calices allascentes, varicolores. The cup here mentioned was called allascent, ἀλλασσων, from its changing its colours, according to the lights in which it was presented: for the glassy material of which it was composed was stained or painted with various colours. Nec enim alia, says Pliny, materia sequacior, aut etiam picture accommodatio. Strabo (lib. xvi.) relates, that he had heard from the operators in glass, in Alexandria, that there was a certain vitreous earth in Egypt, without which these variegated chalices could not

the order appears to have represented to the Emperor answer to those who had

persisted in, the pagan men would become Christians of the letters exhibited

Another Epistle of the philosopher, Marcus V. Aurelius, is given as genuine, though there may be some doubt as to its authenticity. It is said to have been diffused, by letters, among the Egyptian Christians, as precepts and opinions. Philo- sophy, in those who, in his opinion, excel

of Rome, to his mistress Bohemia; to Pyramon, to Domitius of Capua, to some to his Empress Faustina, and some to his most contemptible of literary frauds, as tending to the degradation of posterity as tending to the wisdom of the great man, who Two of his imputed letters, in Greek, and Latin, have more credit, though open to much doubt, as to be written by him to the common of the states in Asia, *Προς κοινον της Ανατολης*, and the other to the senate of Rome, bearing the fact of a great victory having been obtained over the barbarians, among the Pannonians, and the prayers of the Christian soldiery, then of one of the legions of the Roman army. The two last above-mentioned letters is supposed to be from Hist. Eccl. 14, c. 13, and by him as

in glass were common in Rome, and sold in the trade in Egypt, allascontes of which Hadrian wrote. These cups were often curiously decorated with a figuratur, aliud terro tentur, aliud arguere modum in Imperial Rome were often curious in these articles made of gold, and studded sometimes with coral, and hence Servus ab auro gemmato, in old inscrip

of Servianus, of tender age

the same has been asserted by  
by Antoninus Pius. It is also  
Martyr. The first letter runs  
Cæsar, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus,  
Pontifex Maximus, Tribune the 15th,  
time, to the General Council of Asia,

that the vigilance of the gods will provide that  
you describe, shall not escape them: for it more  
belongs to them to punish those who refuse to give  
homage, to which they are entitled, than to you,  
pursuing these men with such fury, only render them  
fixed and determined in their opinions and purposes;  
they covet the opportunity afforded them by being brought  
before the magistrate, of shewing that in the cause of their  
God they prefer death to safety. They would rather throw  
away their lives than do what you would have them, and  
thus from all their inflictions they come out conquerors.  
When the earth has been shaken and convulsed, remember  
how your minds have been filled with terror, and do justice  
to them in comparison with yourselves in this respect. Such  
occasions serve only to shew their trust in their God. While  
you in the same circumstances, though without any resources  
in yourselves, neglect the worship of the gods, and look not  
for immortal aid. The Christians, who seek that aid, you  
drive away, and persecute to the death. Concerning these  
men, many governors of provinces have heretofore written to  
our deified parent, whom he answered by ordering them to do  
them no injury, unless they should be found to be engaged  
in mischievous designs against the Roman empire.

"Furthermore, many have made an ill report of them to  
me, to whom I have answered in terms agreeing with my  
father's sentiments—that if any should persist in bringing  
these men before the tribunals on the charge only of their  
being Christians, let them be acquitted, if no other crime is  
proved against them; and let the accuser be punished for the  
wrong done to them."

The second is also exhibited by the same historian, but is treated as fictitious by Scaliger, and as the invention of some sophist ignorant of Roman affairs. The miraculous fact is, however, circumstantially related by Dion Cassius, who ascribes it to the Divine power assisting the Emperor; and Tertullian, within twenty-six years after the event, appeals to the letters of Marcus in testimony of the miracle. The case is thus narrated—The Emperor, though with a powerful and victorious army under his command, yet finding his forces greatly weakened by fatigue, hunger, and thirst, began to feel his situation in the passes of the mountains to be one of great danger, as well from the want of the supports of nature, as from the attacks of a fierce and numerous enemy, to whom all the defiles and recesses of the country were well known. In this perilous crisis, having offered the usual prayers and sacrifices to his Deities, and seeing that no good resulted from them, he began to suspect the contempt of the gods entertained by the Christian soldiers to be the cause of his ill-success, and was proceeding to deal severely with them, when throwing themselves on the ground, they offered up their united prayers that the God they carried in their consciences would grant relief to the Emperor and his army, who had now for five days been without a supply of water. Immediately the rain fell in refreshing showers upon the space occupied by the Romans, but a storm of fire and hail upon the Barbarians; which soon determined the success of the day. The Emperor relates the event with a brevity and a graphical simplicity, well suited to the man and the occasion; and devotes all to capital punishment who should in future bring to trial any man for being a Christian only, without being able to sustain against him any further charge.

The correspondence of Marcus on the imputed treason of Avidius Cassius, as related by Vulcanius Gallicanus, is very remarkable. He is thus addressed on this subject by his colleague Verus.

## L. VERUS TO MARCUS ANTONINUS.

AVIDIUS CASSIUS will be content with nothing less than empire. This was well known in the time of my grandfather, your father ; and I advise you by all means to have him carefully observed. All our doings are regarded by him with hatred ; he is accumulating treasure ; treats our letters with derision ; calls you a doting old philosopher ; and me a pampered profligate. Weigh well what is to be done ; I have no personal quarrel with the man ; but it behoves you to consult your own and your children's safety, when such persons are among your principal officers, listened to and looked up to by the army.

To this Epistle Marcus made the following answer.

## M. A. ANTONINUS TO L. VERUS.

I HAVE read your letter, and deem it too timorous and distrustful for an Emperor, and not befitting the situation in which we stand. For if the empire is due to him by Divine decree, it will be vain for us to resist the dispensation, however we may wish to do it ; and if not, he will of his own accord, without any act of violence on our part, fall into his own snares.<sup>15</sup> Add to this, that we can not impeach one against whom nobody brings any regular charge ; and especially one whom, you yourself say, the soldiers love. Then observe that a trial for treason has always this natural consequence, that the convicted person seems to suffer oppression. You remember what your grandfather Hadrian used to say, ' Miserable is the condition of Emperors, whose accusations of treasonable conspiracies are never credited till they have fallen a sacrifice to them.' In quoting which observation, I choose rather to borrow from Hadrian than from Domitian, to whom,

<sup>15</sup> The reader cannot fail to be reminded by this passage of 37th, 38th, and 39th verses of the 5th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.



however, it belongs as the real original author of it; for sayings which are good in themselves carry with them less weight than really belongs to them when they proceed from the mouths of tyrants. Let us leave him then to his own humours, since it must be owned he is a good commander, of strict manners, brave, and useful to the republic. As to what you say of the necessity of securing the lives of my children by the death of this man, I plainly tell you I would rather my children should perish than Avidius, if he shall prove himself more worthy of being loved than they, and if it be better for the country that Avidius should live than the children of Marcus.

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After Avidius Cassius had been put to death by the army, without the consent or knowledge of Marcus, the following correspondence took place between the Emperor and the Empress Faustina on this subject, "Venus had written to me," says the Emperor, "a true statement concerning Avidius—that he was ambitious of empire. I presume you heard what the informers reported of that person. Come therefore to me at Albanum, without fear, that we may consult together about all these matters." The answer of Faustina was as follows, "I will come to-morrow, as you desire, to Albanum. But let me entreat you, as you love your children, to punish with the greatest rigour these rebellious proceedings. Both officers and men have contracted bad habits, and must be crushed, or they will crush others. My mother Faustina, in a similar rebellion of Celsus, urged your father Pius to let his piety manifest itself first in the protection of his own kindred, and so he would be the better able to make it beneficial to others. It was indeed the part of a pious Emperor to make his wife and children his first and principal care. Consider the tender age of our Commodus. Our kinsman, Pompeianus, is neither young nor noble. Take care what you do concerning those involved in the guilt of Avidius Cassius. Do not shew mercy to those who had no

feeling of mercy towards you ; and who, had they succeeded in their designs, would have spared neither me nor your children. I am about to follow you ; our little Fadilla has been so ill that I was not able to come to Formianum. If I do not find you there, I will proceed after you to Capua, which place will be beneficial to me as well as your children in the present state of our healths. I pray you, send Soterida, the physician, to Formianum. I have no confidence in the skill of Pisithens in the treatment of a young female. Calphurnius has delivered to me your letters under your own seal, to which I will return an answer, if I shall delay my departure from this place, by old Cæcilius, a trusty man, as you know ; to whom I shall commit by word, what the wife, sons, and son-in-law of Avidius Cassius, boastingly declare concerning you." To which letter the following answer was sent by the Emperor. "You indeed, my dear Faustina, are discharging the duties of a good wife and mother, in sending me the letter which I have read attentively in our Formian Villa, in which you urge me to vindictive measures against those who are implicated in the guilt of Avidius. But notwithstanding all you say, my determination is, to spare both his children, his son-in-law, and his wife, and to write to the Senate to enact no severe sentences either of proscription or punishment. For there is nothing that more recommends a Roman Emperor to the people under his dominion than clemency. This deified Cæsar ; this consecrated Augustus ; this adorned your father with the title of *Pius*. To all this I will add, that if my judgment had prevailed in this affair, not even Avidius himself would have been put to death. Dismiss your alarms ; the powers of Heaven will protect me, for the sake of the piety which I feel in my bosom towards them. I have named Pompeianus consul for the ensuing year."

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Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus were the two most formidable opponents of Septimius Severus, and competitors with him for empire. They both sunk under the genius and

fortune of that able commander: but they were very considerable men in the days of Marcus Aurelius, who bears his testimony to their merits in two letters, which, if we may credit the Augustan historians, may be respected as genuine.

MARCUS ANTONINUS TO CORNELIUS BALBUS.

You write in commendation of Pescennius Niger. I know him; for your predecessor told me he was a man of valour and virtue,—that he was already more than the soldier. I have therefore sent these letters to be read aloud before the standards of the cohorts, by which I have promoted him to the command of three hundred Armenians, one hundred Sarmatians, and a thousand of our own men. It is for you to make known to the army that this man has not attained by corrupt means, or undue influence, (which methods would not be in character with my government,) but by merit only, a charge which my grandfather Hadrian, and great-grandfather Trajan, never confided to any but the most tried and approved officers.

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A letter of the same considerate and humane Emperor on the merits of Clodius Albinus, the other rival of Septimius Severus, bears marks of the same rectitude of sentiment.

MARCUS AURELIUS TO HIS PRÆFECTS.

I HAVE given to Albinus, of the family of the Cejonii, a son-in-law of Plautillus, who, though Africa is his country, has little of the African in his genius and disposition, the command of two cohorts of light troops. He has seen much hard service, is strict in his habits, and severe in his morals. To whatever belongs to the management and supply of camps, he will be found very serviceable, and I dare answer for his not opposing anything that is for their safety and advantage. I have thought fit to assign him a double provision and the usual military vest, but quadruple the amount of pay belong-

ing to his rank. Do you encourage him to present himself to his country as a man receiving only the reward due to his merits.

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And again in another epistle, written when Avidius Cassius was struggling for empire, he thus feelingly expresses himself. "The firmness and fidelity of Albinus is highly to be commended, who by the weight of his authority, kept back the army on the point of going over to Avidius Cassius; and doubtless, if he had not been on the spot they would all have deserted. We have in him, therefore, a man every way worthy of the consular dignity; and whom it is my intention to place in the post now filled by Cassius Papirius, who I am told is all but dead. But I wish you not to let my intention in this matter get abroad, lest it should come to the ears of Papirius himself, or in any manner distress or affect his mind, and we shall appear to be appointing a successor to him before his death."

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The Emperor Severus's letter to the same Clodius Albinus shews to what mean artifices the mind of a man, otherwise lofty, can be made to descend in the prosecution of his ambitious ends. To bring his enemy into his hands he thus writes to him.

THE EMPEROR SEVERUS AUGUSTUS TO CLODIUS ALBINUS,  
CÆSAR, HIS MOST LOVING AND BELOVED  
BROTHER, HEALTH.

HAVING now conquered Pescennius, I have sent letters to Rome, which the Senate, from its affection to you, has gladly received. I beseech you to join with me in the government of the republic with that same spirit which we cherish towards each other, my brother in soul, and in empire. Bassianus and Geta send their salutations. Our Julia salutes both you

and our sister. We shall send to your little son Pescennius Prineus some presents suitable to his and your own condition. My desire is that you retain the command of the army for the republic and myself.

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This letter Severus sent by the hands of some of the most devoted of his body guard, with instructions to deliver it in public to Albinus, but to accompany the delivery with a statement, that they had a private message to communicate relating to military affairs, and also to the secrets of the camp and the palace; which would afford a pretext for drawing him into a secluded place, where they were to dispatch him with daggers concealed under their cloaks. These instructions were punctually obeyed. The epistle was delivered in public, and after Albinus had read it he was requested to withdraw with the messengers into a part of his house where he might be conversed with apart from all observation. So much care was, it seems, taken to send away every witness as they proceeded through a long portico, that the suspicions of Albinus were awakened. The messengers were arrested and put to the torture to extort a confession, which was fully made after some endurance, and Albinus took the field with a strong force against the Emperor, but being after various success entirely defeated, he was put to death, or as some say, died by his own sword.

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The sophist, Philostratus, who, as abovementioned, was in great favour with the Empress Julia, wife of Severus, having been employed by her to write the life of Apollonius Tyaneus, was the author of many letters, which, for spirit and style, were probably among the best of the time in which he lived; and such as have been preserved have a probable air of originality. They are, however, most of them of the amatory kind, and characterised by too much effort, imagery, and refinement.

We have also some sentiments on the subject of letter-



writing from the same pen, in a letter from himself to a correspondent, which are worthy of attention. He was of opinion, that Tyaneus and Dion, among the philosophers, Brutus among the military commanders, the *divine* Marcus among princes, and among the Rhetoricians Herodes, the Athenian, have given us the best models of epistolary composition; being no less to be admired for their delicacy and perspicuity than for the soundness of their principles and the justness of their sentiments; an eulogy hardly to have been expected from one whose own epistolary performances were so loose and effeminate. In this letter of Philostratus, it is well remarked, that the epistolary style should be unlaboured and unincumbered; its true place being between the refinement of the Attic, and the freedom of common discourse;—above the one and below the other, but partaking of both;—not *affecting* ornament, but adopting it in subservience to use and business. Its plan should be to have, or at least to seem to have, no plan. Condensation, he thinks, is allowable in short letters, but compendious and compressed forms of speech he deems to be too argumentative, and of too studied a character for such as do not aim at brevity; unless, indeed, there is occasion towards the conclusion, to bring together the heads of the letter, or to exhibit a summary of foregoing particulars. But he sensibly adds that, after all, perspicuity should be our great aim, as it is the perfection of all forms of writing, but especially important in the composition of letters: whatever be the object of the epistle—whether to request, or concede, or accuse, or defend, or interrogate, we shall always succeed best, by adopting a transparent and natural diction: our aim should be to impart the grace of novelty to common thoughts; and where our thoughts are new to give them an air of familiarity in our manner of exhibiting them.

Thus Philostratus discusses the graces and defects of the epistolary style; and, perhaps, in so short a compass it would not be easy to treat of the subject with more comprehensiveness and precision: but notwithstanding his correct ideas on this matter, and the good sense with which he insists on the

merit of simplicity and perspicuity, he was himself the most distinguished among the sophists, for an ambitious refinement of expression and rhetorical artifice.

Philostratus was a great letter-writer, and, as has been already shewn, he has in one of his letters, which stands as a preface to the series which follows in the collections transmitted to us, given certain precepts and rules for this department of composition, not unworthy of being attended to. His letters are seldom charged with any useful or acute remarks or reflexions: nor can they by any means be recommended, as studies for those who wish to be improved in the special art of correspondence, or in the general proprieties of graceful expression. Erasmus has intimated an opinion in favour of their elegance, not forgetting to condemn their want of decency. Their elegance will probably be disputed by those who are fully sensible of the merit of simplicity in this species of composition, and of that *humilitas docta* in the treatment of familiar topics, of which Erasmus speaks in another place.<sup>16</sup>

Philostratus loses himself in the labyrinth of his own conceits: he is the sophist on whatever subject he is engaged. In the amatory letters in which he so delights, he is Anacreon in prose, enshrining afresh his sensual imagery without the drapery of the Muse. The roses stolen from the garland of the poet wither in the handling of his pedantic imitator. Never surely was a brain so full of the pathos of this flower, and all its various applications in the language of love-sick adulation, as this languishing sophist. There is hardly an epistle in which it is not pressed into the service; and hardly one which modesty could peruse without a suffusion deeper than the rose itself. It is well for the interests of feminine purity that the epistles of Philostratus are in Greek. I find one written to his patroness the empress, which is as follows:

<sup>16</sup> See his *Treatise, de Ratione Conscribendi Epistolas*.

## TO JULIA AUGUSTA.

DIVINE Plato did not regard the sophists with envious dislike, as is well known; but he did certainly emulate, though not envy them in their practice of going from city to city, and from town to town, softening and subduing the inhabitants, after the manner of Orpheus and Thamyras. He was as far above envying another, as emulation is above envy. Envy is the quality of perverse and malicious dispositions. Emulation actuates minds of the noblest character. A man is properly said to envy those things which are above his attainment. But those attainable things by which he may hope to improve, or advance himself, are the objects of his emulation. I maintain, then, that Plato, thought favourably of the opinions of the sophists, and did not yield the superiority to Gorgias himself in the talent of Gorgiazing. He discussed many subjects in the style and manner of Hippias and Protagoras.<sup>17</sup> Thus the spirit of emulation has been variously directed, and most

<sup>17</sup> About the 85th Olympian and the year 440 before the Christian era, Gorgias of Leontium in Sicily, Hippias of Elis, Protagoras of Abdera, and Prodicus of Ceos, alluded to in the above letter of Philostratus, and others in imitation of them, appear to have arrogated to themselves the name and distinction of wise men or sophists, and to have claimed a superiority in the arts of rhetoric and disputation, as well as in all the other departments of human knowledge, over the rest of mankind. Their dexterity in captivating their hearers by the illusory pomp and parade of words, and a very imposing air of profundity in their topics or communes loci, procured for them a much higher reputation than they deserved. Their practice was to travel from city to city, and from town to town, great and small, but generally to the most populous and tumultuous, where they harangued in a style fitted to attract the admiration of the crowd. The sound maxims of wisdom which had been taught by the Grecian sages were disregarded by them, and though they sometimes argued very plausibly on the side of virtue, when it suited their purpose, yet it was apparent to sober and discerning men that their zeal was accommodating, variable, and venal; their real object being only their own gain and aggrandizement. They sold their lessons and instructions at a stipulated price, and undertook to furnish arguments for supporting any hypothesis. Their progress and prevalence in Greece and Sicily received a check from the firm hand of Socrates, who, with great force of reasoning exposed their artifices and delusions. After this blow they never entirely

men of eminence have had their imitators, some following one, and some another. Gryllus was emulous of the Hercules of Prodicus, when he brought vice and virtue contending who should have him for her votary. So a great number of illustrious persons have been admirers of Gorgias. First, the Greeks in Thessaly, among whom the term to Gorgiazæ was in use to express the exercise of the profession of oratory. Then the whole of Greece, among whom, at the Olympic games, orations were pronounced against the Barbarians, from the enclosures of the temple. Aspasia, the Milesian, is said to have exercised the tongue of Pericles in the imitation of

regained their ascendancy, though they continued to practise their devices, and assert their pretensions, till the truths of the Gospel dispensation broke the spell of a fascination, by which the minds of men had been more or less deluded for many centuries.

Philostratus commences the letter above produced with an assertion that the sophists were held in great esteem by Plato. But this favourable opinion of the sect was not intimated in the epithet *λογόμαχος*, which he seems to have applied to these professors of the arts of persuasion, whose chief instrument was a super-refined and affected use of language.

Cicero introduces to our notice the ancient sophists in language that places them full before us. His words are these: "Sed ut intellectum est quantum vim haberet accurata et facta quodammodo oratio; tum etiam magistri dicendi multi subito exuterunt. Tum Leontinus Gorgias, Thrasyarchus Chalcedonius, Protagoras Abderites, Prodicus Cesus, Hippias Eleus, in honore magno fuit; alique multi temporibus eisdem docere se profitebantur, arrogantibus sane verbis, quemadmodum causa inferior (ita enim loquebantur) dicendo fieri superior possit. His opposuit sese Socrates." Brutus VIII. And in another place he says of Hippias Eleus, that when he came to Olympia, "maxima illa quinquennali celebritate ludorum," he boasted in the hearing of almost all Greece, that there was nothing in any art of which he was ignorant. Not only in the liberal arts, such as geometry, music, general literature, poetry, morals, and politics; but that the ring on his finger, the cloak he had on, and the shoes or slippers he wore were the manufacture of his own hands. And Gorgias, in the book of Plato, which bears his name, is represented as undertaking to speak at large on any subject which could be proposed.

Quintilian, in his chapter "De Scriptoris Rhetorice," gives a succinct account of the series of the ancient sophists. Empedocles of Agrigentum, according to some, gave the first start to the enquires into the rhetorical art; and Gorgias is said to have been one of his scholars. The most ancient propagators of the precepts of oratory, and embellished composition, were the same Gorgias, Corax, and Tetas, all of Sicily. Gorgias lived to the age of one hundred and nine, and survived Socrates. During the protracted period of

Gorgias; and it is well known that Critias and Thucydides acquired their loftiness of style from the same model, which gave to each his appropriate distinction,—to the one a remarkable readiness, to the other an equally remarkable vigour of expression. And Æschines, a disciple of Socrates, whom you lately so highly praised, was not afraid in the oration which he wrote concerning the Thargelia to imitate Gorgias's manner.<sup>18</sup> Transcripts and copies of the orations of Gorgias were dispersed over many places, and particularly among the epic

Gorgias's life, a multitude of sophists composed his retinue, and worked upon his pattern, principally Thrasyarchus of Chalcedon, Prodicus of Ceos, and Protagoras of Abdera, (to whom Evathlus is said to have paid ten thousand denarii for his instructions in the art of Rhetoric) Hippas Eleus, Alcedamus Eleates, Anuphon of Rhamnusia, (who was the first that committed an oration to writing,) Polyerates of Athens, (by whom an oration was composed against Socrates,) and Theodorus of Byzantium, which last was one of a number called by Plato *λογόχειρες*. Of these, according to Quintilian, the four named, Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, and Thrasyarchus, were the first who treated generally of the common rules and topics of the Rhetorician's art. After these a numerous succession followed, and the schools of rhetoric began to overflow. In Rome, also, a similar order of writers and propounders of rules in the art of oratory, and the graces of composition, appeared, beginning with Antonius. But it seems that Marcus Cato, the censor, did also something in this way: "Condidit aliqua in hanc materiam M. Cato ille censorius." If the most celebrated teachers of oratorical composition appear to have derived their tact and skill in a great measure from a sophistical source, the most eminent in the art by degrees shook off their trammels, and leaving to the schools of the sophists their artifices and boastful pretensions, adopted a method and course more consistent with conscientious principles and honourable and sincere practice.

<sup>18</sup> The specimen here given of Gorgiasing, or writing after the manner of Gorgias, is not very intelligible. It seems to consist in the words *στειλάειαν*, *στειράειαν*, and *στειράειων*. The effect of the jingle might depend principally on placing the accent in the pronunciation of the words. The Æschines alluded to in the above letter of Philostratus was a hearer of Socrates, and thence generally designated Æschines Socraticus. There are three remaining dialogues of this Æschines. One may perceive by this letter how great an admirer was Philostratus of the little arts or trickery of writing, quite unworthy of a man of any dignity of mind. Photius says of Philostratus, "His Syntax is so very odd; that no writer's was ever like it, for it looked more like Solecism than anything of Syntax. Neither does he this out of ignorance; but because some of the ancients might speak so now and then, he does it everywhere with affectation." (Phot. p. 540.) Cornutus observes it to have been a peculiar



writers. Persuade, therefore, O Empress, Plutarch not to set up for a wiser man than the rest of the Greeks, by inveigling against the sophists, nor to fall so furiously out with Gorgias. But if you cannot persuade him by your wisdom and counsel, you know what name to give him. I know what name would fit him, but I forbear to mention it.

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That the writing of letters became a favourite exercise and fashion among the literary men and sages of Imperial Rome, was a natural consequence of the precepts and pattern of Philostratus, but especially among the sophists, who being very diffuse and unscrupulous in the matter of their epistles, made them the vehicles of a great deal of idle and worthless communication. They seem also to have found much amusement in fabricating letters, which they sometimes dispersed as the productions of men who were far above giving birth to the silly trash imputed to them. Whether the letters, which appear in the various collections as the performances of the sophists themselves, under different titles and designations, were real productions, is a question upon which any labour of investigation would be very unprofitably employed. The collections published with the credit of having Aldus and Cujacius respectively for their editors, after giving us the nugatory correspondence of Apollonius and Philostratus, exhibit a very flimsy compilation of the letters of these sophists, who had assumed, as has been shewn, almost universally, the lecturer's office, and occupied the chairs of the Pythagorean, stoic, and peripatetic philosophers, whose schools were becoming less frequented as the taste for false ornament and sickly sentiment grew in favour and authority.

way of the Attics to put nominatives instead of the oblique cases; and he gives instances from Anstophanes and Philostratus. (Cor. *περί διαλεκτων*). Allian and Philostratus have been thought to be the most Attic of all the tribe of sophists. See Bent. *Phal.* on the Attic Dialect. xii. The omission of grammatical sequence or the *ανακολουθας* was a sort of solecistic figure in composition, practised by Philostratus, and others of that class, with an absurd frequency, and very sparingly by the best writers.

The letters of these teachers, thus brought under our notice, convey but a low opinion of the general state of literature in Rome under the Cæsars. The energies of the mind were sinking fast under the burthen of its moral corruption. That excitement of emulation, which, in the more precarious and contentious state of the Roman power, brought man into stimulating comparison with man, and kept the springs of action in their full tone and tensely, being in a great measure withdrawn under a domination which levelled all conditions, and neutralized the varieties of natural and individual capacity, the mind was left to the prostrating effect of a religion of folly, depravity, and delusion, without any counterpoise or re-action. Vice had the field to itself; sensuality was at no variance with the order of things, and virtue, in an active form, wore the aspect of disturbance. In such a state of society, if society it could be called, not enough of resource was left in the human mind to promote the growth, and sustain the dignity of genius, or to give to thought and ingenuity occasion for its exercise, or matter for its employment. So true it is that the patronage of literature is vested in the great public; and that with them is that invisible throne on which opinion is seated, sending forth her arbitrations and decrees, to which states and communities must ultimately conform.

That the letters either feigned or real of the latter sophists are among the evidences which shew that the genius of Rome declined with her fortunes, a perusal of such collections as we have of them would go far to prove. It may be as well to produce two or three which appear to have the most raciness in them, though they do not come in chronological order, nor can it be required of any reader to sacrifice an hour to such trifles. After detaining us some time with the ineptiæ of Philostratus, our compilers present us with the epistles ethical, rustic, and amatory of Theophilact,<sup>19</sup> a Byzantine historian, who wrote the history of the Emperor Maurice,

<sup>19</sup> He is usually designated Θεοφιλακτος Σχολαστικος Σιμοκαττα, and mentioned as the author of *Επιστολαι ηθικαι αγροικικαι και ιταρικαι*.

terminating with the massacre of that prince and his children by Phocas. The epistles of Ælian, which wholly appertain to rustic matters, and are both insipid and gross. Of Æneas,<sup>20</sup> the sophist; of Procopius, also called the sophist; by whom might be meant the Greek historian, of Cæsarea in Palestine. And of Dionysius, the sophist of Antioch.

SOSIPATER TO AXIOCHUS: THEOPHYLACT.

I HEAR you have recently committed your brother to the grave, and that you are inconsolable for the loss. But that a philosopher, as you are, can allow himself to be thus over-

<sup>20</sup> This would seem, according to Fabricius, (1718 and 2, c. 10) to have been Æneas of Gaza, a Platonic philosopher, and a Christian, who wrote a dialogue, called *The Theophrastus*, on the Immortality of the Soul, and the Resurrection of the Body; and is said to have written twenty-five epistles, which are still extant,—the exact amount of those given us in Aldus and Cujacius.

Gibbon's narrative of the wonderful attestation of the miracle of the tongues, by Æneas of Gaza, is a relation in itself so striking and so very characteristic of that historian's manner, that I cannot forbear introducing it in this place. "The example of fraud must excite suspicion; and the specious miracles by which the African Catholics have defended the truth and justice of their cause, may be ascribed, with more reason, to their own industry, than to the visible protection of Heaven. Yet the historian who views this religious conflict with an impartial eye, may condescend to mention one preternatural event, which will edify the devout, and surprise the incredulous. *Thapsa*, a maritime colony of Mauritania, sixteen miles to the east of Cæsarea, had been distinguished in every age by the orthodox zeal of its inhabitants. They had braved the fury of the Donatists; they resisted or eluded the tyranny of the Arians. The town was deserted on the approach of an heretical bishop: most of the inhabitants who could procure ships passed over to the coast of Spain; and the unhappy remnant, refusing all communion with the usurper, still presumed to hold their pious, but illegal, assemblies. Their disobedience exasperated the cruelty of Hunneric. A military Count was dispatched from Carthage to *Thapsa*: he collected the Catholics in the forum; and, in the presence of the whole province, deprived the guilty of their right hands and tongues. But the holy confessors continued to speak without tongues; and this miracle is attested by Victor, an African bishop, who published a history of the persecution within two years after the event. 'If any one,' says Victor, 'should doubt of the truth, let him repair to Constantinople, and listen to the clear and perfect language of *Restitutus*, the sub-deacon, one of those glorious sufferers, who is

come, I own I am surprised: for what is this formidable thing called death, but sleep; a little longer, perhaps, but brief, indeed, when compared with the futurity which follows. The dead are only gone upon a little journey. Not long to be separated from us. Bear with patience this temporary separation, in the hope of being shortly reunited. Do not let this event prove you to have a soul too fond of the body. Remember that Plotinus was ashamed of his connexion with the body. So much did this mortal covering offend the philosopher. For my sake let your grief stop here, and let prudence mitigate your sorrow. Be your own physician. You have your own medicament at hand—reason. That nepenthes that quiets inward pain, and induces the oblivion of all ills.<sup>21</sup> Reason is

now lodged in the palace of the emperor Zeno, and is respected by the devout empress.”

At Constantinople we are astonished to find a cool, learned, and unexceptionable witness, without interest, and without passion. Æneas of Gaza, a Platonic philosopher, has accurately described his own observations on these African sufferers. “I saw them myself; I heard them speak; I diligently enquired by what means such an articulate voice could be formed without any organ of speech; I used my eyes to examine the report of my ears; I opened their mouth, and saw that the tongue had been completely torn away by the roots; an operation which the physicians generally suppose to be mortal. The testimony of Æneas of Gaza might be confirmed by the superfluous evidence of the emperor Justinian, in a perpetual edict; of Count Marcellinus, in his *chronicle* of the times; and of Pope Gregory the First, who had resided at Constantinople, as the minister of the Roman Pontiff. They all lived within the compass of a century; and they all appeal to their personal knowledge, or the public notoriety, for the truth of a miracle, which was repeated in several instances, displayed on the greatest theatre of the world, and submitted, during a series of years, to the calm examination of the senses. This supernatural gift of the African confessors, who spoke without tongues, will command the assent of those, and of those only, who already believe that their language was pure and orthodox. But the stubborn mind of an infidel is guarded by secret, incurable suspicion; and the Arian or Socinian, who has seriously rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, will not be shaken by the most plausible evidence of an Athanasian miracle.

<sup>21</sup> This is a verse taken from the *Odyssey*, L. iv. 221, which is this:

Νηκινθις τ' ἀχολουτε κακὸν ἐπιλεθὼν ἄπαντων.

When Telemachus and Pisistratus were entertained at Sparta, by Menelaus, Helen mixed a certain drug, which had been given her by the wife of Thone,

terminating with the massacre of the bodies to deteriorate the  
by Phocas. The epistles of these mortal fears to agitate  
to rustic matters, and are but trifles. In this world the  
the sophist; of Procopius of the foulest stains. For  
might be meant the first of our birth rather than of  
And of Dionysius, the beginning of tears

SOSIPATER

I HEAR you have care you do not incur the fate of  
grave, and that your nature into stone.  
philosopher, as

THEOPHYLACT.

This world  
been. But  
a dialogue  
Resurrected  
which  
Cyprian  
by  
of  
"To  
we  
in animal very fond of learning, and  
study of human wisdom. Nor is the  
and structure so much to be admired as  
and of this the Indian servants who at-  
spread abroad many stories. I cannot  
who can be content to be inferior to brute  
son of a sophist, have wasted your patri-  
dice, and your time in idle games; and  
acting in a way to make an end of the  
If you are desirous of being recognised  
Hermagoras, turn to the example he has  
you may be rather late in this amendment,  
late to reform, even in old age, as was  
if your bad habits are so inveterate that you  
abandon them, and still call yourself the son  
know that you rob the sepulchre of your father  
by your iniquity you insult his virtues.

in Egypt, where this intoxicating herb grew, posse-  
the mind into a perfect oblivion of all cares and  
expressed an allegorical allusion to be couched under this  
efficacy of a conversation replete with narratives  
while others take the passage literally, and sup-  
an intoxicating drug to have been mixed in the wine. See the



## THEOPHYLACT.

to borrow money, but think it very hard to pay. And when you meet a creditor, you are terrified as if you encountered some terrible monster. You look around for some place where three ways meet, and cast about your eyes for some gate way, that you may escape from your pursuers; just as those who are in the open sea are eager to attain some harbour. But while you do on thus, you are only adding evil to evil. If you pay some, you continue borrowing from others; acting like those who from the fear of death throw themselves from a precipice. Only consider the misery of being in debt. It is a case of multiplied evil; exceeding the fabled hydra in its automatus excrescences. I would have you to live in such horror of debt, as to dread it even in your dreams. When this shall be your case you will see the bright sun with a cheerful mind; and breathe the air of heaven, while walking on this earth, with joy and gladness.

## ERATOSTHENES TO ESCHINES: THEOPHYLACT.

You swallow oaths like the herbs of the garden; but the performance of what you have sworn to is so hard, that it breaks your teeth. You deny every charge, most infamous of men. When your tongue swears, your mind consents not to the oath. You know not that your unbridled tongue shall in the end make your punishment the heavier. We must expiate in actual suffering the sins of speech. Therefore, keep your tongue in subjection; and be afraid of an oath even for the confirmation of truth. An oath may seem to you a light thing, but it is the heaviest of all burthens. It was for this that Tantalus was so sorely punished: for he did not restrain his tongue even in divine things.

## DIOGENES TO SOSION : THEOPHYLACT.

THIS vile and abject thing which we call glory, is looked upon by wise men as a delusive dream. More contemptible than the figments of fables: inconstant, versatile, the mockery of sound, more evanescent than a breath. While it withholds itself, it is the cause of vexation; when it comes, it brings with it additional sorrow. As soon as it is obtained it proves ungrateful to its lovers. Before it hath come into being, it hath come to nothing.<sup>22</sup> Then let not the gusts of fortune overpower your reason. She sports with us as she pleases. And under her rule, the things of this life are the shades of shadows.

## CROMYLION TO AMPELON : THEOPHYLACT.

NOTHING in nature is more wretched than the condition of the husbandman. Even the winds exercise a tyranny over us. A blast from the east ruins us at once. It has destroyed my crops, my vines, and my clusters. And the worst of it is, I cannot bring to trial the author of these injuries. I am determined, therefore, to lay aside my sickle, and my spade, and to take up the shield, the helmet, and the sword. I will become a soldier, and changing my occupation, will teach wisdom to chance.

## CALLIPIDES TO ANEMON : ÆLIAN.

THOUGH there are many things very desirable in a country life, nothing more distinguishes and adorns it than soft and agreeable manners. To cultivate one's land in quiet, is the happy method of procuring inward tranquillity. But how it is I don't know, but you are to me a rude and unkind neighbour. You drive me from your meadows, and your orchards. If you see a man approaching, you raise a cry as if you were

<sup>22</sup> και πριν γίνεσθαι προς το μη είναι μετ' ὅραμι.

driving off a wolf; so difficult are you of access. And this is what I call bad neighbourhood. If the farm I occupy were not my patrimony, I would cheerfully part with it to avoid so bad a neighbour. But I beseech you, lay aside that savage disposition and behaviour. Let not your irritable temper make you forget what becomes you; lest, at last, you lose your reason, and forget yourself.

TO PAMPUS THE GRAMMARIAN: AENEAS.

MY sorrow for the robbery you have suffered has cast a gloom over my letter; for your loss troubles me just as much as if it had been my own. Nor is it strange it should; for if friends may be said to hold all their possessions in common, the robbery of one is the robbery of all. But on the other hand, when I recollect myself, why should I grieve for this event; he that is above caring for gain, should also be above grieving for loss. This should be our consolation. Am I right in this sentiment. Let me know your opinion.

TO EUCRATIUS: AENEAS.

YESTERDAY he who was a teacher of youth, is to day led about by a youth. He now comes forth in a miserable plight, who was but the other day an object of respect and obedience. Such are the casualties of life. But why commiserate and not relieve. If misfortune were suddenly to deprive a soldier of his right hand, with which he had valiantly fought, would you not think he ought to partake of the spoils of victory. Shall we, therefore, then, who derive our support from our instructions in rhetoric, be inferior to those who follow the profession of arms, in the virtue of friendship.

TO EPIPHANIUS THE SOPHIST: AENEAS.

THE person to whom I have given this letter in charge, hath furnished excellent precepts for teaching both how to live and how to write, as becomes a man of elegance and scholarship.

He is well qualified to take the care and superintendence of a family of distinction. But he is influenced more by the love of his country than by the desire of gain. Having visited and inspected many cities, like another Ulysses, he has now turned his steps towards you as to Alcinous : and to you he will relate his journeys, as Ulysses did to him. But I trust you will put a period to his wanderings by taking him homewards. Nor let his expectation of finding an asylum with you, through my means, be disappointed.

TO JOANNES : PROCOP.<sup>22</sup>

If there was a court to try men for the crime of neglecting their friends, and I were to be summoned before it, and the charge brought against me was that I had treated my friend as not worth my notice, I think I could not better defend myself than by calling you as my witness, who have unaccountably presented yourself as my accuser ; for it did really surprise me to find that a matter of no moment had made you my adversary. Full well do I know that those who are not friends are often very good correspondents, while those who are true friends are obliged to remain long silent, satisfied with the vivid impression of their absent friends on their memories, being occupied and distracted with a multiplicity of business. The mere writing or omission to write is no criterion of friendship, which must be shewn in the mind and sentiment. Therefore consider the question independently of these tests. Whether I retain in my bosom a remembrance which nothing can obliterate, or celebrate your admirable qualities in words, recording you by name, that name which always sounds so pleasantly to my ears ; so long as you entertain a due regard to the sincerity of my feelings, you will give to me, though silent, more of your affection, than to any other, though his

<sup>22</sup> Procopius was also a sophist, of Gaza, and contemporary with Aëneas. Sixty epistles, attributed to him, remain. Photus makes very honourable mention of him. See Fabric Bibl. 1718 and 2, c. 10.

professions should be so loud as to raise the echo of the temple of Dodona. But lest you should make use of the same excuse to be silent, I must invoke you to sing out, or I shall change my ground and contradict all I have been saying.

## TO DIODORUS: PROCOP.

WHEN I read your letters, our former happiness together was revived in my memory. That Nile, and the pleasing vision I once had of your person on its borders, recurred to my thoughts. I could not help shedding tears when I mused on the fickleness of fortune, sometimes elevating, and sometimes depressing us; sometimes bringing friends together in a way none could have expected, and again separating those whom it had brought together beyond expectation. How wise is the remedy which has been found for all this, in the intercourse by letters, which reanimates the affections, and in a manner brings one's friend into one's presence in the characters formed by his hand.

## TO ORION: PROCOP.

IN absence, the fidelity of a friend is most satisfactorily proved. The professions made to one in his presence are equivocal. This is sometimes done as an actor on the stage assumes and personates another; but if a friend maintains his zeal and attachment when at a distance, he proves himself to be one who knows how to keep, and maintain the sacred laws of friendship. Now this is the character in which you present yourself, far surpassing what has gone before by your subsequent conduct. If children usually reflect the image of their fathers, my fame is exalted in the merits of my son; who, by his virtuous and prudent behaviour, has brought his parent from small pretensions to great honour, and has caused him to be spoken of with respect in all cities and places. Continue to follow out that virtue of which the foundation was laid with me in lectures and discourses. And prove yourself to have studied the laws with the same diligence and success.



## TO MUSÆUS : PROCOP.

THE most learned Palladius has brought your letter to me—all gold. And truly, had he brought to me the wealth of Croesus, I should not have looked upon him with greater complacency. Some place their glory in one thing, and some in another—the Lydian in gold; the Lacedonian in his spear; Arion in the chords and pulsations of his lyre. My boast and glory is in these letters; and whatever else I am permitted to enjoy from the reports brought to me of yourself. I owe, therefore, to the young man for bringing these letters, a debt, which I am ashamed not to discharge. The price he is entitled to is not payable in gold, nor in the gems of India: in these I do not abound; nor was it for things of this sort that these letters and reports were brought me. I cannot thank him with an elegant speech, for I am not possessed of such endowments. Neither can I express myself with attic grace and ornament. In these things the children of the great and prosperous make their boast. If then you desire to hear what gift or reward I am intending to bestow, I answer—benevolence and heartfelt gratitude. Of these I am master, as said Demosthenes. Presents of another kind I leave to fortune and the muses to bestow at their pleasure.

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I have thus selected a few of these Greek epistles, which are the vagrant progeny of some of the latter sophists; scattered among different collections, without home or parentage. Some few, beside those above extracted, may claim a little notice and respect, but the far greater number are worthy only of the limbo in which they lie immured, unvisited, and half forgotten.

## CHAPTER XVII.

LETTER WRITING FROM THE TIME OF PHILOSTRATUS  
TO THE TIME OF LIBANIUS.

SOME specimens of imperial correspondence which have an air of genuineness, intervening between the time of Philostratus and the dynasty of Constantine have been interwoven in the history of that interval. The correspondence of the excellent Misithius with his son-in-law the third Gordian, seems to light up with a momentary flash the gloom that then invested the moral world. That youthful and amiable prince had been under the dominion of his mother and a rabble of eunuchs who had filled all the offices of the court, and occupied all the avenues to royal favour, closing the ears of the monarch against all honest and profitable counsel. His marriage with the daughter made him the friend of Misithius, a man of great worth and wisdom, whom he raised to the prætorian præfecture, and adopted as his parent and the guide of his inexperience. The letter of Misithius runs thus :

TO HIS LORD, SON, AND EMPEROR, MISITHIUS HIS  
FATHER-IN-LAW AND PRÆFECT.

IT is a delight to me to think that we have gotten rid of the great stain and disgrace of these times, those wretched eunuchs, who have so long had all things at their disposal, and have made merchandise of every thing, under the guise of friends to you, to whom in truth they have been the bitterest enemies. And it must be the more pleasant to you to reflect upon this wholesome reform, as you yourself have had no share in the vices which it has corrected, my worthy and greatly to be respected son. That military appointments have been corruptly

bestowed by these persons on those who have been incapable of exercising them; that meritorious services have been defrauded of their rewards; that capital punishments and acquittals have followed the dictates of lust and avarice; that the treasury has been exhausted by those who have taken credit to themselves for the discovery of conspiracies at the moment of their commencement, while these worst of men have been preparing plots against the good, and spreading idle and false reports to bring the worthy under odium and suspicion; have been so many deeds of darkness with which you have had no participation or privity. How thankful then ought we to be to Providence that you have so zealously entered into the reformation of all these abuses. I am truly happy in the reflection that I am the father-in-law of a good prince;—of one who lets nothing of importance go unexamined; and has determined to expel from his counsels the men who have hitherto made a traffic of his imperial authority.

THE EMPEROR GORDIAN TO MISITHIUS HIS FATHER  
AND HIS PREFECT.

UNLESS the Omnipotence of heaven had protected the Roman empire, we should have by this time been put up at auction, and our authority made a market of by a rabble of hired eunuchs. At length I am brought perfectly to understand that the man who has been put at the head of the prætorian schools was unfit for the station; and that the fourth legion ought never to have been entrusted to the person to whom its command has been given; and, not to go into particulars, that abuses have been numerous in all departments of the state. But I thank heaven that by your suggestions, who are yourself above all such practices, I have been made fully sensible of what has been going on while I was kept from this knowledge by my seclusion within the palace. What good could I be capable of while obliged to follow the dictates of a chief of the eunuchs, who, calling to his counsels three others of a like stamp, constrained me to adopt all their

commendations. My dear father, I wish to disclose to you without reserve the real truth. Miserable is that emperor whose situation is such as to require concealment, who as he cannot himself go among his subjects to acquire a knowledge of what is doing, by his own personal observation, ought, at least, to have the opportunity of ascertaining the state of facts from the concurrent testimony of others.

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The third Gordian was accompanied by the Prefect Misithius, in his Persian campaign ; and his letter to the senate is greatly distinguished among dispatches of this kind for the modesty with which he assigns to his friend and counsellor the merit of his successes. It is to the following effect in the Augustan historian, Julius Capitolinus.

"I will in the next place, Conscript Fathers, in a few words condense the many things which have been done in our victorious progress, worthy, each of them, of a triumph ; we have delivered the whole of Antiochia from the Persian yoke, the tyranny of their kings, and their laws. Carræ and other neighbouring cities have been reduced under the Roman sway. We have carried our victorious arms as far as Nisibis ; and, with the favour of heaven, we hope to proceed to Ctesiphon. So much we owe to Misithius, our prefect and father, under whose conduct and direction we have hitherto acted, and shall continue to act. It is your part to decree the proper supplications to commend us to the divine protection, and to render the public thanks due to Misithius."

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As a contrast to the letters of the younger Gordian may be read that of the emperor Gallienus, the son of Valerian, which is one of the most striking epistolary samples of revengeful malevolence luxuriating in the pride of the purple. It is written to Celer Verrianus, his general, after the victory obtained over Ingenuus, his competitor, one of those whom Trebellius Pollio reckons among the thirty tyrants, under

whose brief and nominal sway, the Roman world, or parts of it, successively passed.

GALLIENUS TO VERRIANUS.

You will fail in satisfying me, if you content yourself with putting to death only those who are found in arms, whom the chance of battle might have disposed of. I would have all the males sacrificed, without any exception, if the slaughter of old men and boys would not subject my name to too much reproach. Let every one who is suspected of ill will towards me be put to death; and to the same fate let all be devoted who open their mouths against me, against *me* the son of Valerian, against *me* the father and brother of so many princes. Have I lived to see Ingenuus declared emperor. Tear, slay, cut to pieces. You may understand the extent of my indignation by my having written these things with my own hand.

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The epistolary testimonies of Decius and Valerian to the virtues of Claudius, who afterwards attained the summit of power, are good specimens of princely regard to merit. It is thus that Decius writes to Messala the governor of Achaia.

"We have ordered Claudius the tribune, a youth of the fairest promise, a most gallant soldier, a most upright citizen, and necessary alike to the camp, to the senate, and to the republic, to repair to Thermopylae, for the protection of the Peloponnesus, being well persuaded that I can look to no one with equal confidence for the faithful and effectual discharge of whatever high duties are assigned to him. I desire you to furnish him with two hundred soldiers from our province of Dardania, let him have two hundred and sixty horsemen, whereof let one hundred be cased in complete armour, to which let there be added sixty Cretan archers; and a thousand of the new levies well armed. I assign him this last-named force, because I know him to be one to whom a raw soldiery may be trusted; for than Claudius there does not live a man



more qualified to promote its  
reformation."

Such is written to Ablavius Muræna,  
in the following terms.

N. AUG. TO A. MURÆNA PREF.

Be that Claudius is still only tribune, and is  
in command of the army. Nor tell me any longer  
of the senate and people to the same effect.  
In command—in command of all Illyricum. To  
be the Thracian, Mesian, Dalmatian, Pannonian,  
and other armies. This great man has the consulship open  
to him, and when he is disposed for it, the prætorian  
office is within his attainment. We wish you to under-  
stand that we have assigned to him the same salary as that  
of the Egyptian præfect; robes of office the same in splendour  
and number as those belonging to the African proconsulate;  
a table equal to that of Melatius the procurator of Illyri-  
um; and as large an attendance as we allow ourselves in the  
great cities; that all may understand in what esteem I hold  
so excellent a person.

A letter of the emperor Valerian to Antonius Gallus the  
consul exhibits his opinion of the severe qualities of Aurélian,  
who afterwards ruled the empire with such sanguinary  
justice and military renown.

You blame me in your familiar letters for committing the  
education of my son to Posthumius rather than to Aurélian, in  
opposition to the usual practice of selecting a person of strict  
principles for the management of our children, as well as for the  
command of our armies. This may be true, but you would  
change your opinion as to the course I have taken, if you  
saw to what an extreme Aurélian carries his notions of dis-  
cipline. He is too exact and severe for the tone and temper  
of the times in which he lives. I must in all sincerity con-

fess, that I am afraid of his carrying himself with more than necessary rigour towards a youth, perhaps a little too much given to the levity of behaviour natural to his years."

Another epistle of the same emperor is produced by Vopiscus from the archives or repertory of the Urban præfecture, in which we see at once the high estimation in which Aurelian was held, and the correct principles by which the mind of Valerian was governed in his dispensation of rewards. The letter is to Ceionius Albinus, the prefect of the city.

"We should, indeed, be very willing to make a much larger allowance than that which is assigned to their rank and station when we are remunerating the services of men of distinguished merit, whose conduct would justify the most profuse rewards. But the strictness with which public affairs should be administered requires that no one should receive more out of the funds raised in the province in which he holds his command, than the salary annexed to his official rank. We have appointed Aurelian, a man of consummate bravery, the inspector and distributor of all our camps and military stations; who, by the confession of the whole army, has deserved so well of us, and the whole republic, that hardly any rewards can exceed, or even equal his merits. In what part of his character is he not illustrious? where is he inferior to the Corvinus's and the Scipio's. The deliverer of Illyricum, the restorer of Gaul, the model of a complete commander. And yet for all this I dare not add to his rewards anything beyond what the sober maxims of a well regulated republic can allow."

The military epistle of Aurelian himself to one of his officers is in the style of an experienced commander, and an inflexible disciplinarian; but it more especially indicates the stern character of this emperor.

"If you desire to remain tribune, nay, if you desire to remain a living man, keep the troops in strict subjection. Let no one touch what is not his own, not a poulet, or a sheep, or a grape, or an ear of corn. Let no one exact any oil, salt, or wood; but let every one be content with his allowance of provision. Let the source from which he draws subsistence

be the spoils of victory, and not the tears of the provincialists. His arms must be kept clean and dry; his weapons well sharpened; his sandals firm; his vestments properly changed; let his pay be in his belt, not in the tavern; let his collar, bracelet, and ring be on in due order; let him rub well down his sumpter-horse; let him beware of selling his animal's provender; let each charge himself with the care of the baggage mule of the division; let medical attendance be gratuitous; let no money be squandered on pretenders to divination; let all demean themselves modestly and quietly in their quarters; and let the promoters of disturbance be corporally punished."

The epistle of Aurelian to the senate concerning the inspection of the Sibylline oracles is rather a curious specimen.

"I cannot but feel surprised, Venerable Fathers, that you have hesitated so long to open the Sibylline books, just as if you were in a Christian church, instead of the temple of all the gods. Proceed in your work without further hesitation. Encourage the pure ceremonies of the priests; assist your prince labouring for the public good. Let the books be forthwith inspected; and let all attendant ceremonies be duly performed. I for my own part devote without reserve, money, captives, royal animals, and whatever the success of battles has put in my power to the use and exigence of this solemn occasion; for I deem it honourable to conquer with the gods on our side. It was with such that our ancestors entered upon and ended their glorious wars. I have sent to the prefect of the treasury authority to furnish the necessary supplies. The public chest, which I perceive to be at this juncture replete with treasure, I place at your discretion."

The letters of Aurelian as given us by Vopiscus are very characteristic, and bear strong marks of genuineness. The following account brings the man and his style of letter-writing before us in strong relief. When, after a triumphant series of exploits he came with his small but veteran force before Tyana, the native place of the celebrated Apollonius Tyaneus, he was much incensed at finding it shut against him, and was provoked to exclaim, "I will not leave a living dog in this town." The city was taken, and a man named

Heraclammon, who had made a treacherous proposal to Aurelian to shew him a pass through which his troops might enter the place, was among the captives. Upon this occasion the emperor made an imposing display of his severity and his lenity. The traitor was put to death by order; but when the soldiers, eager for spoil, called upon him to put his threat of destroying the city into execution, reminding him of his declaration, that not a dog was to be left alive in it, "it is true," replied the emperor; "I did say I would not leave a dog alive in Tyana; kill, therefore, all the dogs you find in it." This, says the historian, was a grand speech, and the suffrage of the soldiers more than responded to it. They declared their entire agreement with the resolution of their general, by which they thought themselves more enriched than they would have been by the plunder of the city. The epistle of the imperial general is remarkable. It is addressed to Mallius Chilo in the following terms:

"I have given up Heraclammon, to whose treachery I owe the capture of Tyana, to merited execution. I could not give my countenance to a traitor; I have, therefore, allowed him to be killed by the soldiers, as I reasoned that one who had no regard to his country, could never keep his faith with me. He is the only one of all the citizens of Tyana whose life has been taken from him. The man was certainly rich; but that none might suppose that to get possession of his riches influenced my determination, I restored his property to his children."

The city, according to the historian, was taken in a manner worthy of admiration. Aurelian entered singly by a way shewn to him by Heraclammon through the rampart, and holding before him his purple tunic, while his person was visible to his soldiers, that were still without, the citizens surrendered, supposing the whole force of the emperor to be within their walls. It is reported, says the historian, that Aurelian had meditated the destruction of the city of Tyana, but that he was deterred from the execution of his design by Apollonius Tyaneus himself, the friend of the gods, and himself adored as a divinity in this place, who

suddenly stood before the emperor, and thus addressed him :  
 " Aurelian, if you wish to conquer, think no more of destroying this city. Aurelian, if you wish to reign, abstain from the blood of the innocent. Aurelian, if you wish to live, practise clemency." The form of the venerable philosopher was recognised by Aurelian from its conformity to the image in many temples ; and full of astonishment and awe, he immediately promised an ample dedication of divine honours, and a merciful treatment of the conquered city.<sup>1</sup>

The letter of Aurelian to Zenobia is written with the stern brevity of an habitual conqueror.

AURELIAN, EMPEROR OF THE ROMAN WORLD, AND RECOVERER OF THE EAST, TO ZENOBIA, AND THOSE WHO ARE IN WARLIKE LEAGUE WITH HER.

You would have acted better for yourselves if you had done that of your own accord which you are now commanded to do. I command you to surrender upon the terms I propose, which are these—your life shall be spared, so that you spend that life with your friends, where I shall, with the advice of the august Senate of Rome, think fit to place you. Your jewels, silver, gold, and precious things, you must give up to the Roman treasury. The Palmyrenes shall have their liberty and laws.

Zenobia's answer was as follows :—

ZENOBIA, QUEEN OF THE EAST, TO AURELIAN AUGUSTUS.

No one ever yet demanded what you demand by letter. It is not by the pen, but by the sword that the business of war is

<sup>1</sup> Vopiscus is determined to believe every foolish relation of the miracles of Apollonius Tyaneus. He concludes his account of the particulars above stated with the following remarks : " These things I have learned from the credible information of grave men, and have often read them in the Ulpian library, (formed by Trajan, and removed by Dioclesian to his baths to give them celebrity,) and have fully credited, as being in correspondence with the greatness of the man. For what among men has ever appeared more vener-



to be transacted. You demand my surrender ; as if you could be ignorant that my ancestor, the royal Cleopatra, chose death rather than splendid slavery. We are not without the assistance of the Persians, and are now expecting them. The Saracens are for us, the Armenians are for us. And remember, Aurelian, that the Syrian robbers routed your army. What then are you to expect, if the forces we are looking for should come to our assistance. You will probably then lay aside this haughtiness with which you now command me to surrender ; as if the universe were at your feet."

The above Epistle of Zenobia is said to have been translated from the Syrian into the Greek language ; the Emperor's having been written in Greek. And for having advised the letter of Zenobia, Longinus was put to death<sup>2</sup> by Aurelian, when the city, together with its Queen, fell into his hands. The soldiers called loudly for the execution of the Queen, but the Emperor thought it more for his glory to reserve her for his triumph. The cruel disposition of the victor after these successes was exercised with little restraint ; and upon the revolt of the Palmyrenes, which took place shortly after the first conquest, a second victory was obtained, which was distinguished by the most savage marks of his vengeance, as appears by his Epistle written in characters of blood, to C. Bassus.

able and sacred. He has restored the dead to life ; and if any one desires to know more of his super-human acts and sayings, he may find them in his life written in Greek." The account is given in Philostratus, who, however, does not say that the girl so carried out for dead was certainly dead ; but makes it a doubtful point whether he did not find a spark of life in her which had not been perceived by the attendants. *Επετι επινθησα της ψυχης εναν εν αυτη, ο ελεληθει θεραπευοντας.*

<sup>2</sup> The praise bestowed on Dionysius Cassius Longinus by Porphyry, in his life of Plotinus, has placed him at the head of all the scholars and rhetoricians of his time. Few particulars of his life have been transmitted to us. He tells us in one of the fragments which have been preserved, that he travelled much in his youth, and derived the most important help to his studies from his familiar intercourse with the scholars and philosophers of his time. The place of his birth has been much in dispute ; but the most probable opinion has fixed it at Athens, where his maternal uncle, Cornelius Fronto, was in great reputation as a teacher of eloquence. His uncle died and made him

## AURELIAN AUG. TO CEIONIUS BASSUS.

THE swords of the soldiers have done their work, and ought now to be stayed. The Palmyrenes have been slaughtered enough. We have spared neither women, nor children, nor old men, nor the rustics of the field; all have been promiscuously slain. To whom now shall we deliver the city or the territory round it? Such as have been left alive, may now be spared. The destruction of so great a number have given a lesson to the few, by which they are sufficiently corrected. My desire is, that the temple of the sun, which the standard-bearers and trumpeters have plundered, be restored to its former state. You have three hundred pounds of gold from the coffers of Zenobia, you have also one thousand eight hundred pounds of silver, and you have the royal jewels. With these means you may set up the temple in its ancient lustre; and in so doing, you will do an act well pleasing to me, and to the immortal gods. I will write to the Senate requesting a priest to be sent who may dedicate the temple.

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Valerian was one of the best and wisest of the Roman Emperors, and was particularly distinguished by his discernment in the discovery of worth in others. His was the unhappy lot of many fathers; to see their well directed efforts to promote the general ascendancy of virtue contravened and baffled by the pernicious examples of their children. It is

his heir; after which even he commenced his travels, from which at a mature age, full of experience, and the fruits of his studies and learned communications, he returned to Athens, and published his admirable commentary on the sublime in composition. At the invitation of Queen Zenobia, he repaired to her court as the instructor of her children, but was soon adopted by her as her counsellor and friend; and it was in this capacity that he appears to have encouraged her to assert and maintain her authority and independence against Aurelian. His end appears to have been characterised by the philosophy and constancy which had accompanied him through his life. The last words used by him to his sorrowing friends, by way of consolation, are said to have been to this effect, "As the whole earth ought to be considered by us as only a sort of spacious prison, he surely is the happiest man who is the soonest restored to liberty."

thus he writes to Probus, who afterwards emulated his virtues in the purple, in conferring upon him the command of the third legion.

"My very dear Probus, when the merit of your actions is duly considered, I seem to be late in promoting you to the high command now offered to you, and yet it must be confessed that your promotion is rapid. Receive into your allegiance the third, which is called the prosperous legion, which I have never yet committed in trust to any but a mature and able officer; and which was not confided to myself till my head was hoary, and then it was considered as a subject of gratulation. But I do not wait for the maturity of years in you, who in manners and attainments have already acquired all that age and experience could impart. I have ordered for you a treble allowance of military clothing, and a double stipend; and I have also assigned you a veteran standard-bearer to attend upon you."

The letter of Probus to Narses, King of Persia, is in the old Roman and republican humour, and to the full as laconic as any of those ascribed to Brutus. It is thus he rejects the proffered presents of the great king.

"Considering that all you possess must soon be ours, I cannot but wonder that of that all you send so little. Enjoy in the interim what you possess; which when we are pleased to make our own we know how to do it."

The epistle of Julius Calphurnius, the keeper of the records of public transactions, which is next exhibited, is introduced in the pages of Vopiscus by the following narrative.

Carus, the successor of Probus, having with a great military force, for the whole of which he was indebted to the resources and ability of the great Emperor who had preceded him, nearly decided the Sarmatian war, proceeded, without encountering an enemy capable of opposing him, against the Persians; captured the whole of Mesopotamia, and extended his victories even to the walls of Ctesiphon. His success was so rapid, owing in a great measure to the domestic distractions of Persia, that he was honoured with the title of *Imperator Persicus*; but when urged onwards by his ambi-

tion, and the reproaches of his prefect, he would fain have proceeded further, he was taken off, as some say, by disease, but as more assert, by lightning. Certain it is, that just about the time of his dissolution, such a storm of the elements took place, that some were said to have died from the effects of the terror it produced. The Emperor was lying in his tent, and suffering from sickness when the tempest took place, and his death was probably hastened by it. The Epistle above-mentioned to the prefect of the city was as follows. "When Carus our prince, dear to us as his name imports, was sick, a furious tempest arose, accompanied with such darkness as to render all objects invisible. Its corruscations were so vivid as to look like the incessant vibrations of a fiery meteor. The confusion was so great that all cognisance of passing events was obliterated, and the panic was universal. In addition to these horrors, the prince's chamberlains, in their desperate sorrow for the loss of their prince, set fire to the imperial pavilion; whence arose the rumour of his having been struck dead by the lightning, whereas from all we can gather on the subject, his death was the consequence of the disease under which he was at that time labouring." The biographer adds, "I have inserted this Epistle, because it has generally been considered that there was a certain decree of fate, that no Roman prince should ever be able to pass beyond Ctesiphon, and that Carus was consumed by lightning, that he might not attempt to transgress the boundary which fate had prescribed to Roman enterprize."

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About the period of the Emperor Julian, elaborate letter-writing much employed the pens of learned men, and the talent was held in high esteem, when the sophist and orator Libanius distinguished himself in this province of literature. Eunapius, in his lives of the philosophers, thus speaks of Libanius: "In his epistles, and such like familiar compositions, he affected the ancient form of phraseology. His writings are full of ornament, and a certain attractiveness arising out of the peculiarities of his diction pervades his



works. They have a dramatic air. In Attica his style was considered as very sensible and spirited. He had the relish of the old comedy, which, mixed with his own manner, often delighted the ear. The reader will find in his orations considerable learning and knowledge. But he was fond of a strange and antique style—a recondite language borrowed from the old time, which he furbished up, giving to things, old and trite, an original air. The Emperor Julian could not help admiring it; and all were surprised by the graceful turns of his elocution. Many of his works are of a nature and quality not to be understood and appreciated without some pains and ingenuity: on the whole, however, his orations must be confessed to be in general cold and barren of interest.” In the opinion of Gibbon, the writings of Libanius were the vain and idle compositions of an orator who cultivated the science of words,—the productions of a recluse student, whose mind, regardless of his contemporaries, was incessantly fixed on the Trojan war, and the Athenian commonwealth. Yet, says the same historian, the sophist sometimes descended from this imaginary elevation. He entertained a various and elaborate correspondence. He praised the virtues of his own times. He boldly arraigned the abuses of public and private life; and he eloquently pleaded the cause of Antioch against the just resentment of Julian and Theodosius. Libanius experienced the peculiar misfortune of surviving the religion and sciences to which he had consecrated his genius. The friend of Julian was an indignant spectator of the triumph of Christianity; and his bigotry, which darkened the prospect of the visible world, did not inspire Libanius with any lively hopes of celestial glory and happiness. Near two thousand of his letters are still extant, of which Dr. Bentley might justly, though quaintly observe: “You feel the emptiness and deadness of them, and that you are conversing with some dreaming pedant with his elbow on his desk.”<sup>2</sup>

The Emperor Julian, who from 360 to 363 A.D. ruled the

<sup>2</sup> Dissertation on Phal. Vol. II, p. 84. Ed. 1836.



Roman world, was deservedly distinguished as an ingenious and agreeable letter-writer. His letters are, in general, colloquial and easy in style, clever and full of comment, and, upon the whole, entitled to rank with the best specimens of familiar correspondence in the Greek language. Of the class of letters called familiar, the epistle of Julian to the Emperor Constantius, on his assuming the purple by the compulsion of his army, is certainly not one, being rather a document containing the exposition of a fact which was to account for an event, on which the fortunes of the empire were suspended. It is, however, a proper prelude to the few letters I shall produce of this extraordinary man, as bringing him before the reader, when taking the first step of his short and brilliant career, as Emperor of the world. The legions of which Julian was invested with the command as Cæsar, and which he had led so often to victory in Gaul and Germany, were ordered by Constantius to march into the east. At this destination, to a new and distant scene of danger and toil, the army was indignant. A tumult arose, and, from the subordinate dignity of Cæsar, Julian was exalted, by military acclamation, to the supreme rank of Augustus; and upon this event the following epistle, preserved by the historian Ammianus, was written. It seems to have been composed in his own name and that of the army.

JULIAN CÆSAR TO THE EMPEROR CONSTANTIUS.

BEING always in one and the same opinion, I have adhered on principle, no less than from regard to my engagements, to that which I sincerely proposed, as has been made apparent in a number of instances. As soon as I was made Cæsar, I was exposed by you to all the tumults and horrors of war; yet contented with a delegated commission, I filled your ears with frequent accounts of all the successes you could have desired, laying no stress upon my own dangers, though it was continually proved that the Germans being everywhere dispersed and routed, I was foremost in labour, and the last in seeking rest.

You shall hear whether any changes have been made by me as you suppose. The soldiers having wasted their lives in severe campaigns, without advantage, and being discontented with the rule of one of the second order, a *Cæsar* not having it in his power to recompense them for their daily fatigues, and frequent victories, and being unappeased by any increase of honours, or by receiving the year's pay now due ; and finding themselves, contrary to their expectation, ordered to the remotest parts of the east, unaccustomed as they are to frozen climates, there to be separated from their wives and children, and to be driven forwards in a destitute condition, in a state of unusual excitement, besieged the palace, exclaiming *Julian Augustus*, with loud and repeated cries. I own I trembled, and withdrew, and as long as I could, retired from the scene and sought safety in silence. But as no time was allowed me, I came forth, with no other guard than my conscious integrity, and presented myself to them, thinking that my authority and gentle expostulations might restore tranquillity. Their fury carried them so far that, on my trying by entreaties to overcome their obstinacy, pressing close upon me, they threatened immediate death. Subdued at length, after an inward struggle, and being convinced that if I were killed, another person would be declared prince, I gave assent to their wishes, in the hope of thus appeasing the tumult. You have here the substance of this affair, which I beg you to receive with a favourable impression : and do not think that I have misrepresented any thing, nor give any credit to evil reports by persons maliciously disposed, whose custom it is to turn the revolts of princes to their own advantage. But banishing flattery, the nurse of vice, cultivate justice, that most excellent of all virtues, and receive in all good faith the equitable terms which I now propose, regarding them as being for the good both of the Roman state, and ourselves, who are allied by consanguinity, and the elevated rank we maintain. (He then proposes terms of mutual assistance and accommodation, and thus concludes.) In giving this counsel, and requesting and entreating your acquiescence, I am convinced I am consulting

the public good ; for, not to assume to myself more than my situation justifies, I know well what may be done by the mutual good understanding of princes towards retrieving the most difficult and embarrassed affairs ; and the examples of our ancestors shew, that where rulers have been of this mind and opinion, they have found the true method of living happily, and of rendering their memory precious to the latest posterity.\*

After a fruitless treaty, Julian found it necessary to act with promptitude and decision. He did not, however, deem it proper to reject at once the terms proposed to him by Constantius, on his compliance with which, it was declared the clemency of his sovereign was suspended. He was required to renounce the appellation and rank of Augustus, and commit the direction of military and civil affairs over which he had assumed the

\* Gibbon observes, that in this negociation Julian claimed no more than he already possessed. The delegated authority which he had long exercised over the provinces of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, was still obeyed under a name more independent and august. The soldiers and the people rejoiced in a revolution which was not stained with blood. Florentius was a fugitive ; Lupicinus a prisoner. The persons who were disaffected to the new government, were disarmed and secured ; and the vacant offices were distributed according to the recommendation of merit, by a prince who despised the intrigues of the palace, and the clamours of the soldiers. It seems the letters found Constantius at Casarea, in Cappadocia. On reading them, the Emperor is said to have been extremely enraged. He commanded the Embassadors to withdraw, without giving them any further audience. He was very near quitting the Persian war, in which he was then engaged, to march immediately against Julian. He contented himself, however, with sending a Quæstor to him, with a menacing letter, and recalled his principal officers.

Soon after his being proclaimed Emperor, Julian marched his army against Constantius ; but previously to his setting out, and some say while on his march, he wrote letters to several cities of Greece, to justify his assumption of the imperial power. His letter to the Senate and people of Athens is preserved, and may be considered as creditable to the feelings of the writer as to his taste in composition. This epistle gives a full and detailed narrative and exposition of the conduct and motives of Julian, and is a valuable historical record.

Gibbon says this is one of the best manifestos to be found in any language.

government, to the hands of the officers appointed by the Emperor. The letter containing these terms was read aloud, and the announcement of Julian that he was ready to resign the purple, with the consent of those who had raised him to the dignity of wearing it, was refused by the universal voice of the army. Julian's message in reply to Constantius, written in a strain of eloquent resentment and contempt, was, in effect, a declaration of war, and "He who, but a few weeks before, had celebrated the Christian festival of the Epiphany, made a public declaration that he committed the care of his safety to the immortal gods, and thus publicly renounced the religion, as well as the friendship of Constantius." During the extraordinary march of Julian, to contest with Constantius the empire of the world, the death of the latter was announced to him as he approached with his army the walls of the city of Aquileia, with the doubtful issue before him of the siege of that important but almost impregnable place. As soon as the imperial troops in Aquileia were assured of the decease of Constantius, they opened the gates of the city, and Julian, now in the thirty-second year of his age, acquired the undisputed possession of the Roman empire.

The historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire has drawn the portraiture of this prince with a vigorous but rather partial hand, the perusal of which will probably increase the interest with which the letters of this extraordinary person are read. The account of Julian, which follows the description of his modest entry into Constantinople, to assume singly the sceptre of the Roman world, is in the best manner of the historian, some of the strokes of whose pencil will bring his hero very distinctly before the reader.

"An innumerable multitude pressed round him with eager respect, and were, perhaps, disappointed when they beheld the small stature, and simple garb, of a hero, whose inexperienced youth had vanquished the barbarians of Germany, and who had now traversed, in a successful career, the whole continent of Europe, from the shores of the Atlantic to the shores of the Bosphorus. A few days afterwards, when the remains of

Constantius were landed in the harbour, the subjects of Julian applauded the real or affected humanity of their sovereign. On foot, and without his diadem, and clothed in a mourning habit, he accompanied the funeral as far as the church of the Holy Apostles, where the body was deposited; and if these marks of respect may be interpreted as a selfish tribute to the birth and dignity of the imperial sovereign, the tears of Julian professed to the world, that he had forgotten the injuries, and remembered only the obligations which he had received from Constantius."

Philosophy had instructed Julian to compare the advantages of action and retirement; but the elevation of his birth, and the accidents of his life, never allowed him the freedom of choice. He might, perhaps, sincerely have preferred the groves of the academy, and the society of Athens; but he was constrained, at first by the will, and afterwards by the injustice, of Constantius, to expose his person and fame to the dangers of imperial greatness; and to make himself accountable to the world, and to posterity, for the happiness of millions.<sup>3</sup>——The throne of Julian, which the death of Constantius fixed on an independent basis, was the seat of reason, of virtue, and perhaps of *vanity*. He despised the honours, renounced the pleasures, and discharged with incessant diligence the duties of his exalted station; and there were few among his subjects who would have consented to relieve him from the weight of the diadem, had they been obliged to submit their time and their actions to the rigorous laws which their philosophic Emperor imposed on himself. One of his most intimate friends (Libanius) who had often shared the frugal simplicity of his table, has remarked, that his light and sparing diet (which was usually of the vegetable

<sup>3</sup> It is but too characteristic of the pages of this splendid historian, to put the world and its judgment in the place of Him by whom that world was created, and who "shall call the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge his people." Thus fearful accountability hardly assumes its proper place and priority in Mr. Gibbon's estimate of our duties, dangers, and responsibilities.



kind) left his mind and body always free and active, for the various and important business of an author, a pontiff, a magistrate, a general, and a prince.——He possessed such flexibility of thought, and such firmness of attention, that he could employ, at the same time, his hand to write, his ear to listen, and his voice to dictate; and pursue at once three several trains of ideas, without hesitation, and without error. While his ministers reposed, the prince flew with agility from one labour to another, and, after a hasty dinner, retired to his library, till the public business, which he had appointed for the evening, summoned him to interrupt the prosecution of his studies.——By this avarice of time he seemed to protract the short duration of his reign; and if the dates were less securely ascertained, we should refuse to believe, that only sixteen months elapsed between the death of Constantius, and the departure of his successor for the Persian war. The actions of Julian can only be preserved by the care of the historian; but the portion of his voluminous writings, which is still extant, remains as a monument of the application, as well as of the genius, of the emperor.

His reformation of the palace, his correction of abuses in the administration of public justice, his love of freedom, and the forms and spirit of the republic, his disregard of all state and pomp, his care of the Grecian cities, his laborious administration of civil and military affairs, are set before us by the historian with all his accustomed vigour, borrowing additional animation from his feelings of partiality; and the detail of these particulars is brought to a satisfactory close in the general draught of his hero's character, in the following terms: "The generality of princes, if they were stripped of their purple, and cast naked into the world, would immediately sink into the lowest rank of society, without a hope of emerging from their obscurity. But the personal merit of Julian was, in some measure, independent of his fortune. Whatever had been his choice of life; by the force of intrepid courage, lively wit, and intense application, he would have obtained, or, at least, he would have deserved, the highest

honours of his profession ; and Julian might have raised himself to the rank of minister, or general, of the state in which he was born a private citizen. If the jealous caprice of power had disappointed his expectations ; if he had prudently declined the paths of greatness, the employment of the same talents in studious solitude would have placed, beyond the reach of kings, his present happiness, and his immortal fame. When we inspect with minute, or, perhaps, malevolent attention, the portrait of Julian, something seems wanting to the grace and perfection of the whole figure. His genius was less powerful and sublime than that of Cæsar ; nor did he possess the consummate prudence of Augustus. The virtues of Trajan appear more steady and natural, and the philosophy of Marcus is more simple and consistent. Yet Julian sustained adversity with firmness, and prosperity with moderation. After an interval of one hundred and twenty years, from the death of Alexander Severus, the Romans beheld an emperor, who made no distinction between his duties and his pleasures ; who laboured to relieve the distress, and to revive the spirit of his subjects ; and who endeavoured always to connect authority with merit, and happiness with virtue. Even faction, and religious faction, was constrained to acknowledge the superiority of his genius, in peace as well as in war ; and to confess with a sigh, that the apostate Julian was a lover of his country, and that he deserved the empire of the world."

Thus Julian comes forth in the pages of the luminous historian, but cold Christian. It is just, however, to that historian to remark that his partiality did not prevent his admitting, in its full extent, the affectation and vanity of his hero. He would, however, have made his own equity clearer, had he remembered, in summing up the character of Julian, to notice with due reprehension his gross dissimulation ;<sup>6</sup> and to lay

\* *Diu simulavit Christi sacris se adhaerere, et etiam in memoris martyrum frequenter versatus ; et inter lectores ecclesie nomen professus est suum.—* Ab. A.C. 355, Cæsar publica in ecclesia sacris interfuit. Sed simul ac adversus eum, factum jam Augustum, Patruelis, Constantius Imp. infestum animo prodidisset, ac deinde, Constantio mortuo, Julianus solus obtinisset impe-

more stress upon the fact, that until he was created Augustus, and was in collision with the Emperor Constantius, he adhered to the faith in which he was educated, attended all the services of the sanctuary, and the celebration of the martyrs, and was one among the lecturers of the church; but that immediately on his assuming the highest imperial dignity, he became a public and professed idolater.

Affectation is so large an interpreter of human actions, that it may not be the proper subject of severe scrutiny, in one, especially, who acted so public a part on the great theatre of the world. Of his vanity it must be acknowledged that it had, upon the whole, rather a noble bearing; and excited an emulation in his bosom, which kept some of his greater qualities in lively exercise. There is hardly a character in history which has been so variously represented, according to the very opposite sentiments of those, into whose hands it has fallen. He was, without controversy, a great man—rising always far above his fortunes, and greatly superior to the corruptions of courts, and the pomps of empire. Even the Christian, on moral grounds, owes some tribute to his memory; and if, when he reads of the dying hero, staining with his blood the field of victory, he drops a tear upon the page, let him not be ashamed of the humanity which mourns over the perversities of our prostrate nature.

At the risk of being accused of irreverence, if not of profaneness, by those who consider the fourth century as the period in which Christianity attained its full stature, I must say that I find in it some shades of apology for the prejudices of Julian, and will venture to surmise that even the fathers of the church, with all their general excellencies, did nevertheless display

rum, Idololatriam se, et atrocem Christianismi hostem et insectatorem palam professus est.—Christi doctrinam oppugnavit, scriptis nihilque intermisit quo Christianis agrefacere, et idolorum cultum promovere possit, licet a neco plerumque, nam interdum etiam sub Juliano atrocibus in Christianos suppliciis animalversum, abstinuit, quod priorum persecutorum exemplo edoctus, hoc pacto opprimi ecclesiam non posse, martyrii quoque gloriam Christianis invideret. Fabricius Bibl. Græc. L. v. c. 41, ed. Hamb.

before the eyes of the unhappy prince so incorrect a representation of the Christian life and character, and a religious theory and belief so at variance, in some respects, with gospel-simplicity and scripture-truth, as to furnish his unwilling mind with but too plausible a ground on which to take his stand, and marshal all the strength of his boasting philosophy. If the fathers of the fourth century, instead of presenting Christianity to the contemplation of Julian in the uncomely dress in which superstition had clothed it, with its human atonements, and with its theatrical apparatus of relics and wonders, had shewn to him what has been done for us, in its all-sufficient and affecting dignity, as the work of a forgiving God, and a dying Saviour, and as the gift of free and sovereign grace, the cost of which was paid by one comprehensive and solitary sacrifice, extensive as sin itself, and appropriated by the believing heart,—if they had thus presented it to Julian, in its simple majesty and beauty, standing entire on its own proper basis of revelation and testimony, his mind might have been better disposed to the reception of truth, and to see in their real deformity the monstrous absurdities to which he had surrendered his understanding.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The religious character of the fourth century stands out very prominently in most of the writers contemporary with that period, so much eulogised of late. Augustin, adverting to the miserable superstitions which were everywhere prevalent in his day, avows himself afraid to speak against them, for fear of scandalizing many holy persons, or provoking those that were turbulent. "Nay," he says, "the Catholic church itself did see, and dissemble and tolerate them." *Multa quæ in divinis libris saluberrime præcepta sunt minus curantur; and then, tam multis præsumptionibus sic plena sunt omnia.* The same father, in his confessions, gives full credit to the miracles wrought by the martyrs Gervæus and Protasius, whose bodies, when discovered and dug up, and carried to St. Ambrose's church, not only drove out the unclean spirits from those of whom they had possession, but restored sight to a blind man, on his being permitted to touch the bier with his handkerchief. To this marvellous operation and miraculous exhibition Ambrose was assisting, and the story comes to us with the full credit of his name and patronage.

Sulpicius Severus, who had hardly a right to find fault with extravagance of opinion, but to whose authority surely much respect is due on the subject of right religious conduct, has borne a strong testimony against the practice of the church in his time, which the eulogizers of the pure religion of the fourth

The epistles of Julian have been collected by various hands, at various periods. They may be considered as amounting to between seventy and eighty, some having a better claim than others to be received as genuine: but they appear, in

century must find it difficult to reconcile to the partial retrospect with which they regard it. Having spoken of the example of moderation given by the Levites, for whom so slender a provision was made, he proceeds thus, *Equidem hoc exemplum non tacitus præterierim: legendumque ministris ecclesiarum libenter ingesserim. Etenim præcepti hujus non solum immemores, sed etiam ignari mihi videntur; tanta hoc tempore animos eorum habens cupiditas, veluti tabes, incessit. Inhiant possessionibus, prædia excolunt, auro incubant, emunt venduntque, quæstui per omnia student. At si qui meliores propositi videntur, neque possidentes, neque negociantes, quod est multo turpius, sedentes munera expectant; atque omne vitæ decus mercede corruptum habent, dum quasi venalem præferunt sanctitatem. Sed longius quam volui egressus sum dum me temporum nostrorum piget, tædetque.* Sulpic. Sev. Sac. Hist. l. i. s. 43.

The miracles imputed to the relics of St. Babylas have Chrysostom for their zealous advocate; and instances might be greatly multiplied to shew that all the fathers of this century adopted, and promoted the belief of all manner of stories of the same kind.

I cannot dismiss this note without giving as specimens a story or two from Sulpicius Severus out of his marvellous budget. The cow has figured so little in these extraordinary transactions, that it is but fair towards it to give it the first place. As Martin (the famous bishop of Tours, originally a soldier in the Roman army) was returning from Treves, he was met by a cow, which cow was possessed by a demon, and was wont to leave the herd and goad the passers by. When she approached, those who followed her at a distance vociferated their warning to keep out of her way. But on her coming near to us, with fury in her eyes, Martin, lifting up his hand, commanded her to stand still, and at the word she stood fixed in her place. When Martin perceived the demon sitting on her back, "Depart," said he, "thou pest, and leave off worrying this harmless animal," and forthwith the fiend obeyed, and departed. Nor was the cow unconscious of her deliverance, or to whom she was indebted for it. She first cast herself at the feet of the saint with her tranquillity restored to her, and then, at the bidding of Martin, returned to her companions as gentle as a lamb.

Another, equally entitled to credit, Sulpicius introduces in the following terms, with this additional ingredient of wonder in it, that the miracle was not performed by Martin, but by a friend in his name. "A very troublesome dog (importunior) was barking at us; in the name of Martin I bid you to be quiet; the dog's voice stuck in his throat (*hæsit in guttura*), he was so quiet that one might suppose his tongue had been cut out. It was not enough that Martin him-



general, to be drawn from repertories which entitle them to credit; while their internal evidence may be also adduced in their support.\* Many of them are the effusions of private friendship, and have the ease and vivacity which belong to

self should perform cures, believe me when I say that others wrought many in his name." St. Peter and St. John were outdone; see Acts iv. from 7 to 10. "When they had set them in the midst, they asked by what power, or by what name, have you done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, 'Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole.'"

Those who are entertained with stories of this kind may find many in Sulpicius of a similar character; or, if he would be more pleased with them in a poetical dress, he may peruse them with the advantage of the muse of Paulinus of Nola.

\* The nine first, among numerous Greek epistles, were printed by Aldus in 1499, 4to. The tenth was preserved by Socrates in his history, iii. 3. The others to the forty-eighth all appear in the collection of the *Epistolæ Græcæ Mutozæ* published in 1606, in folio, with a later translation attributed to Cujacius; though this has been denied by learned men, and by Gronovius among others, who has considered the translation as falsely ascribed to that able and eminent scholar. Sozomen, in his ecclesiastical history, has preserved the 49th. See lib. v. c. 16. Peter Martinus first added the 50th, 51st, and 52d in Greek, together with other epistles. Paris, 1567 and 1583, 8vo. The succeeding epistles to the 57th inclusive, were published at Leyden, by Bonav. Vulcanius, at the end of the problems and epistles of Theophylactus Simocatta. The 58th and 59th, doubtfully blended together, were first published by Nicholas Recalt, who added a translation at the end of his *funus Parasiticum*. Paris, 1601, 4to. And both were published, but divided into two by Petau, or Petavius, till they were made complete, by the addition of the remainder supplied from a MS. by Muratori, in his *Anecdota Græca*, in 1709, 4to. The 60th, 61st, and 62d, were first published by Petau, from a copy of an old MS. lent him by Patricius Junius. The 63d, which Martinus and Petau have given in Greek only, but very imperfectly and incorrectly, Ezekiel Spanheim amended, and supplied from the MS. of Allatus, and first added a Latin version. Muratori has also published three other epistles of Julian, the 64th, 65th, and 66th, from the same MS. See Fabric. *Bibl. edit.* Hamburg, 1790, l. v. c. 41. For the remainder of the epistles of Julian, we are indebted to the researches of Fabricius, Muratori, Petau, and Rosgaard, a Danish nobleman, who was a great investigator of literary antiquities; copied from MSS. in the Vatican, Medicean, and Ambrosian libraries.

letters of that kind ; others are edicts in the form of epistles, and some are styled by Gibbon "pastoral letters" dictated by the Emperor as Sovereign Pontiff.

JULIAN TO PROHÆRESIUS.<sup>9</sup>

Why should I not address the excellent Prohæresius, one who pours forth his words as copiously as rivers when they overflow the meads ; the rival of Pericles in eloquence, except that he does not agitate and embroil Greece. Be not surprised that I imitate the Lacedæmonian brevity. It becomes you wise men to make long and prolix speeches ; from me to you a few words will be enough. Understand then that I have a great deal of embarrassing business on my hands. If you are writing a history, I will furnish you with an exact account of the cause by letters, which will serve as written testimonies : but if your purpose is to pass the remainder of your life in your present exercises and studies, and giving lectures, you will not, perhaps, have any cause to complain of my silence.

TO ARISTOMENES.

Do you think it necessary to wait to be invited ; and will such formality never be rendered superfluous by friendship and kindness ? Let us avoid bringing on such a troublesome code of rules in the commerce of friendship, as shall make friends expect as much from each other as common acquaintances. Does any one ask how we come to be friends when we are personally unknown to each other, I answer by another question, —How is it that we are the friends of those who were living one or two thousand years before us ? because they were

<sup>9</sup> One of the Christian professors, who were obliged by Julian's edict to close their schools. His profession of a teacher of Rhetoric was exercised by him principally at Athens, but he was everywhere celebrated ; and at Rome, such was the admiration in which he was held, that a statue was erected to him. Eunapius was a disciple of this sophist. His death was celebrated by Gregory Nazanzan, in an epigram preserved by Muratori, in his *Anecdota Græca*.

virtuous, good, and honest men. We are desirous of resembling them. And though, as regards myself, I am conscious of being far behind them in attainments, yet in zeal and affection I am not far distant from them.

But to leave trifling. If you come uninvited, you will come, and that is what I want; if you expect an invitation, behold one. Therefore, by Jupiter hospitalis, be with me, I entreat you, without delay. Shew us a true and genuine Greek among the Cappadocians;<sup>10</sup> for as yet I see only some who with unwilling minds, and some few who with better dispositions, but without knowing how properly to perform the duty, sacrifice to the gods.

#### TO ECDICIUS, PREFECT OF EGYPT.

ALTHOUGH you write to me on no other subject, you ought surely to have written to me concerning Athanasius, the enemy of the gods; especially as you have long well known our edicts against him, so justly merited. I now swear by the great Serapis, that if that enemy of the gods does not leave Alexandria, or rather all Egypt, before the calends of December, the army under your command shall be fined a hundred pounds of gold. You know how slow I am in condemning, but how much slower in remitting a sentence once passed. It grieves me greatly to see how all the gods are despised by that person. Nothing that you can do, would give me more satisfaction to see and hear of, than that you had driven Athanasius out of every part of Egypt;<sup>11</sup> that infamous man; who has presumed

<sup>10</sup> Ἄνδρα ἐν Καππαδοκίαις καθαρῶς Ἑλληνα. Caesarea, the capital city of Cappadocia, was nearly composed of Christians; and the temples of Jupiter and Apollo were almost wholly destroyed when this letter was written. The last heathen structure that remained was the temple of Fortune, and that had lately been demolished. Julian had confiscated the property of the churches, forced the clergy into the militia, and put to death those who had assisted in the destruction of the temple of Fortune. He furthermore took from the city its municipal name, and made it resume its old name of Mazaca.

<sup>11</sup> According to the Abbé de La Bleterie, who published in 1735, *La vie de l'Empereur Julien*, that Emperor, not content with banishing Athanasius,

under my reign to urge<sup>12</sup> Greek women of illustrious rank to be baptized.

TO ARTABIVS.

By the gods! I would neither have the Galileans put to death nor scourged, contrary to justice, nor suffer any other injurious treatment. I think, indeed, that the worshippers of the gods should be more esteemed and honoured; for by the madness of these Galileans, all things have been well nigh overturned: had we not by the goodness of the gods been all preserved! It is our duty, therefore, to pay respect to the gods, and to all pious individuals and states.

TO ECDICIUS, PREFECT OF EGYPT.

SOME delight in horses, some in birds, and others in wild beasts. The love of books was from my early youth my ruling passion. It would be disgraceful, therefore, for me to look quietly on, while those, whose avarice gold alone cannot satisfy, are stealthily appropriating these things. Do me, therefore, the particular kindness to find for me all the books which belonged to George; for he was in possession of many well written books on philosophy, many on rhetoric; and not a few on the doctrine of the Galileans; which last I could wish were put out of existence; but lest others more valuable should be destroyed together with them, let all of them be

gave, perhaps, secret orders to put him to death; or at least, Ecdicius, to ingratiate himself with Julian, who seemed to think him negligent, resolved upon his death. Athanasius was retreating into Thebais when he was told he was pursued. "Fear nothing," said he to his companions, "let us shew that he who protects us, is greater than he who persecutes us;" saying this, he ordered the boat in which he was carried to be steered back to Alexandria. They were met by the assassin, who asked them if they had seen Athanasius, and whether he was far off. They answered, he was near, and that, if they made haste, they would not fail to overtake him. The assassin made haste, but in vain. Athanasius returned to Alexandria, and there remained concealed. It must be owned that the suspicion cast upon Julian seems to rest upon no foundation.

<sup>12</sup> ἐπεισθαι. An ambiguous word in this place.

carefully examined. Let the secretary of George be your guide in this search ; and, if he acts with good faith, let him have his freedom as his reward ; but if otherwise, he may be put to the torture. When I was in Cappadocia, George lent me some of his books to transcribe ; and these were returned to him.<sup>13</sup>

TO MAXIMUS<sup>14</sup> THE PHILOSOPHER.

FAME has recorded that Alexander of Macedon used to sleep upon the poems of Homer, that night and day he might be in converse with his military instructions. But I sleep with your epistles, as so many Pæonian medicines ; and continue to recur to them with the same freshness of enjoyment as if they were for the first time in my hands. If, therefore, you are desirous of impressing your picture on my mind by your writings, write, continually write, or, what is still better, come yourself, the gods befriending you ; being assured of this, that as long as you are absent I can hardly be said to live, except only when I have the good fortune to receive your letters.

<sup>13</sup> The fate of George, who was promoted to the primacy of Egypt on the expulsion of Athanasius, is well known. He was born in Cilicia, and received his education in Cappadocia. He owed his exaltation to his profession of Arianism. His violent and oppressive conduct occasioned his expulsion by the people in the reign of Constantius ; and being by military force again seated in his authority, his violence and injustice was such, that a cruel end was put to him by the fury of the populace. This George of Cappadocia, by a strange perversion of historical truth, has become the St. George, and patron Saint, of England.

<sup>14</sup> Maximus was one of the philosophers and friends of Julian who accompanied him in his Persian expedition, and was with him when he was mortally wounded. The last words of Julian were uttered in an argument with Maximus and Præsus, on the nature of the soul, Ammianus, xxx. 5, which some have thought was affected in imitation of Socrates. Maximus was in the highest reputation as a philosopher in Julian's reign. Lardner thinks him not a wise man, but such as he was, he was in great favour with Julian. He was imprisoned in the reign of Valens, and finally beheaded, on a charge of using magical arts, by Festus, proconsul of Asia, in 374. A charge of magic was often fatal to the accused in the reign of the Emperor Valens.



## TO THE COMMUNITY OF THE JEWS.

THE taxes to which you are obliged to submit, and the large quantity of gold you are compelled to pay into the treasury, under surreptitious decrees, were in former times more burthensome to you than the yoke of servitude under which you lived: of which I saw much with my own eyes, and have learned more from the edicts against you which have been preserved. The tribute about to be again exacted from you I have prohibited. I have put a stop to such a gross impiety; and the decrees against you, remaining in my office, I have given to the flames. Of these things the memorable Constantius, my brother, was not so much the cause, as those barbarous and atheistical men who frequented his table; whom I laid hold of and had them cast into a dungeon and destroyed, that no memorial of them might remain among us. Being desirous of giving you still more distinguished marks of my favour, I have urged my brother Julius, your most venerable patriarch, to forbid the tax which is called by you *αποσολη*,<sup>15</sup> and to take care that no one may be able, for the future, to oppress your community with such exactions; that you may be able to live with ease and comfort in my dominions; and that, under a sense of such benefits,

<sup>15</sup> After the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews are said to have preserved a sort of monarchy, under an Edmarch, styled also Patriarch, to whom a tribute was paid by all the synagogues of the east and west; and those who were commissioned to levy this tax were called *apostles*, or envoys. These patriarchs made themselves odious by their extortions and rapine; and the system lasted only to the beginning of the fifth century. See Tillemont's *Hist. des Emp.* vol. i. The foreign Jews in Palestine seem to be still supported by contributions sent from Europe; the collecting of which used to be by sending messengers, *אפסול*, from Jerusalem to the different cities of Europe for the purpose. But this being a very expensive method, it has been discontinued; and the money is sent to Amsterdam, where it is received by a rich Jewish merchant, who transmits it to the Austrian consul at Beyrout, by whom it is conveyed to Jerusalem. The average amount is said to be 7000 ducats, or 14,000 dollars, = 2800*l.* See *Narr. of a Mission of Enq. to the Jews from the Ch. of Scotland*, 1839. The messengers of the churches for collecting contributions are called *αποσολοι εκελεσιων*, in 2 Cor. viii. 23.

you may be more fervent in your prayers for my empire to the most potent God, the Creator of all things, who has condescended to crown me with his own unsullied hand. Those who are tormented with cares and anxieties have their minds clogged and fettered, so that they cannot so much as lift up their hands in prayer; whereas those who are free, and unshackled with care, have cheerful hearts to offer up their supplications to God, who is able to make the state as happy and prosperous as I wish it to be; which prayers it is your duty to offer up, that when I shall have brought the Persian war to a happy conclusion, I may dwell in your holy city of Jerusalem; which these many years I have been desirous of seeing inhabited by you, restored by my labours; and may therein unite with you in giving glory to God.

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The above singular epistle has been suspected to have been a forgery, on account of some extraordinary expressions it contains, and particularly the declaration that he had arrested the informers against them with his own hands, and thrust them into prison. But it is certain that in the chamber of justice established by Julian, the favourites and informers about the court of Constantius were proceeded against with the greatest rigour. And from many sources we learn that Julian sent for some of the leading Jews, to enquire of them why they did not sacrifice as the law of Moses directed; to which enquiry they answered, that they were not permitted to sacrifice in any place but Jerusalem; and that the temple being destroyed, they were obliged to forbear that part of their worship: upon which he promised to rebuild their temple. And, says Lardner, "we still have a letter of Julian inscribed 'To the community of the Jews,' which, however extraordinary, must be reckoned genuine; for Sozomen expressly says, that 'Julian wrote to the patriarchs and rulers of the Jews, and to their whole nation, desiring them to pray for him, and for the prosperity of his reign.'"

Gibbon, in a note to the passage wherein he notices this public epistle of Julian to the Jews, observes, that "Aldus has branded it with an *εὐ γνήσιος*, but adds that this stigma is justly removed by the subsequent editors, Octavius and Spanheim." And Warburton thinks that what Gregory Nazianzen, in his second invective, tells us of the conference that followed this letter, plainly shews it to be genuine; for Julian assured the leaders of the Jews, that he had discovered from their sacred books, that the time of their restoration was at hand. "It is not a mere curiosity," says the bishop of Gloucester, "to enquire what prophecy it was that Julian perverted; because it tends to confirm the truth of Nazianzen's relation. I have sometimes thought it might possibly be the words of the Septuagint in Dan. ix. 27, *Συντελεια δοθησεται επι την ερημωσιν* (the ambiguity of which expression Julian took the advantage of against the helenistic Jews, who probably knew no more of the original than himself), signifying 'the tribute shall be given to the desolate,' instead of 'the consummation shall be poured upon the desolate;' for the letter in question tells us he had remitted their tribute, and, by so doing, we see, he was for passing himself upon them for a second Cyrus." Alypius, whose humanity, says Gibbon, was tempered by severe justice and manly fortitude, had an extraordinary commission from Julian to rebuild the temple, and the diligence of Alypius obtained the strenuous support of the governor of Palestine. The work was begun, and prosecuted with the greatest enthusiasm. The men forgot their avarice, and the women their delicacy. Spades and pickaxes of silver were provided by the vanity of the rich, and the rubbish was transported in mantles of silk and purple. And now was exhibited one of the most remarkable and best attested miracles mentioned in history; an earthquake, a whirlwind, and a fiery eruption, which overturned and scattered the new foundations of the temple."

Amunianus Marcellinus, commended by Gibbon as a philosophic soldier, who loved the virtues without adopting the prejudices of his master, has recorded in his judicious and

candid history of his own times, the extraordinary obstacles which interrupted the restoration of the temple of Jerusalem. Lardner has declared his suspicion of the miracle, grounding that suspicion chiefly on the silence of Jerome, Prudentius, and Orosius; but for the miracle there is, besides the testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus, a heathen, the following affirmative authorities, brought together in Whitby's general Preface (p. 28); Zemuch David, a Jew, who confesses that Julian was *divinitus impeditus*; Gregory Nazianzen, and Chrysostom, among the Greeks; St. Ambrose and Rufinus among the Latins, who flourished at the very time of the alleged fact; Theodoret and Sozomen, orthodox historians; Philostorgius, an Arian; Socrates, a favourer of the Novatians, who wrote the story within fifty years after the event, and whilst the eyewitnesses of the fact were yet surviving. The whole account is fully given by Dr. Warburton, who has, says Bishop Newton, set the evidence in the clearest light, and refuted all objections, to the triumph of faith, and the confusion of infidelity.

## TO AMERIUS.

I DID not read your letter in which you informed me of the death of your wife, and expressed the extreme affliction which this loss has occasioned you, without tears. The thing itself is very affecting—a young wife, modest, the delight of her husband, and the mother of pious children, snatched away before her time, like a torch just set in a blaze and immediately extinguished. Though the loss is peculiarly yours, it almost as affectingly touches myself. Least of all did my excellent friend seem to deserve such a stroke of affliction; a man full of knowledge, and one of my friends the most valued by me. If I were writing to another man on the same subject, I should think it necessary to use many words in shewing him that what he now suffers is the common lot of human beings; that it must be patiently borne; that we gain nothing by indulging our grief; and, in short, should make use of all those ordinary arguments which seem best adapted to mitigate the sufferings

of an inexperienced person. But as I consider that I am addressing one who is in the practice of giving counsel to others, I am ashamed of employing arguments which are used to improve and instruct the ignorant. Waving, therefore, all such topics of consolation, I will relate a fable, or it may be a true story, to you, perhaps, not unknown, though I believe not known to many, by the sole use of which, as a sort of *Nepenthes*, you may find a no less effectual remedy for your grief, than the cup which the Spartan dame is said on a similar occasion to have given to *Telemachus*.<sup>16</sup> The story is, that *Democritus* of *Abdera*, finding that nothing he could say could afford any solace to the mind of *Darius*, who was mourning the loss of his beautiful wife, promised to restore her to life, if he, the king, would, on his part, supply that which was necessary to be done preparatory to the undertaking. *Darius* desired him to spare no expense, but to take every necessary step toward the performance of his promise. Soon afterwards *Democritus* told the king that things were ready for the performance of the work; one thing only was wanting, and that he knew not how to procure, but *Darius*, as sovereign of all *Asia*, would, perhaps, find no difficulty in providing it. On his enquiry what that great thing was, which it was for a king only to know how to perform, *Democritus* is said to have replied, "if you will write on the tomb of your wife the names of three persons who had entirely escaped all affliction, she will forthwith be restored to life." *Darius* being perplexed, and unable to name any one that had suffered no affliction, *Democritus*, laughing, thus addressed him, "Are you not ashamed, O most unreasonable of mortals, thus to give way to grief, as if you were the only one in the world who had been exposed to calamity, while you are unable to point out a single individual who has not endured some domestic loss or misfortune?"<sup>17</sup> *Darius*, a barbarian, and untutored man, required to be instructed by

<sup>16</sup> *Odys.* l. iv. v. 220.

<sup>17</sup> *La Bletterie* considers this story of *Democritus* and *Darius* as a sort of philosophical novel. The story, he says, is nowhere found.



such lessons as these; but you, who are a Greek, and have been instituted in sound learning, are expected to govern yourself; otherwise a discredit would be cast upon reason itself, if it should appear to be unable to mitigate sorrow as effectually as time.

EPISTLE, OR EDICT, FORBIDDING THE CHRISTIANS TO TEACH  
POLITE LITERATURE.

We consider true learning to consist not in words, nor in the harmony of polished language, but in the sound constitution of a well regulated mind, and right conceptions of good and evil, of the beautiful and the base. Whosoever, therefore, has other views, and teaches other notions to his hearers, is as far from being a learned, as he is from being a good man. If there is a variance between the mind and the tongue, even in small and trifling things, it is evil as far as it extends; but if in things of great importance there is a discordancy between what a man thinks, and what he teaches, does he not resemble the vendor of adulterated food. It is not the conduct of respectable men, but of knaves. Those, therefore, who teach what in their real opinions they deem to be false and wicked, are deceptions and ensnaring in what they recommend. All who undertake the office of teachers, whatever may be the subject matter, ought to be characterized by the strictest probity and integrity, and to be incapable of the unworthy practice of disseminating opinions, which are at variance with those which they mentally hold; and, above all others, such integrity of proceeding is becoming in those who are engaged in the profession of teaching and instructing the young, and expounding the writings of the ancients, whether they are rhetoricians or grammarians, but especially if they are sophists, for they desire to be considered as qualified to teach not only how to speak, but how to live, and profess to give lessons in political philosophy. Whether this be so or not, I shall not at present consider. I give due commendation to those who hold out the promise of such good things, but I should com-

mend them much more if they did not belie and contradict themselves, by thinking one thing, and teaching their scholars another. What! Did not the gods conduct the studious labours of Homer, and Hesiod, and also of Demosthenes, and Herodotus, and Thucydides, and Isocrates, and Lysias? Did not some of these consider themselves devoted to Mercury, and others to the Muses? It is absurd, therefore, for those who give lectures on their works, to despise the gods whom *they* honoured. I am not so unreasonable as to hold that these teachers ought to change their minds for the sake of the youths they instruct, but I give them their choice, either to forbear teaching what they do not deem to be right and good, or, if they choose to teach, let them first persuade their scholars to think as they do of Homer and Hesiod, and those whom they expound; and let them not, while they charge them with impiety, folly, and error, in respect of the objects of their worship, seek to gain a subsistence out of their writings; and by receiving a reward for their teaching, confess themselves to be influenced by the most sordid motives, and to be acting contrary to their consciences for a few drachms.<sup>16</sup>

Hitherto there have, I allow, been many causes to prevent their coming to the sacred ceremonies; and the dangers to which they have been every where exposed were an excuse for their dissembling their real sentiments concerning the gods; but since the gods have granted us liberty, it seems to me to be wicked to inculcate doctrines which they do not deem to be right and just.

If they think the writers whom they interpret are really

<sup>16</sup> La Bletterie observes upon this passage, that Julian well knew by his own experience that masters, when they explained to their scholars the ancient authors, never failed to insist on the weakness and folly of paganism. He was sensible how much a Christian master can contribute to the progress of religion, when he interprets profane authors with the spirit of a Christian, and equally avails himself of the truth and the falsehood which he finds there, in order to conduct his pupils to God and Jesus Christ. This is what Julian wished to prevent. But instead of discovering his true motives, he employs the most lamentable pretext that can be; so that this piece of eloquence is a master-piece of sophistry.

wise, let them zealously imitate their piety towards the gods. But if they think these excellent men to have been in great error, let them go to the churches of the Galileans, and there expound Matthew and Luke, in obedience to whom you proclaim that sacrifices are to be abstained from.

I would your ears and tongues were, as you express it, regenerated, in those things in which I wish that myself, and all who in sentiment and practice are my friends, may participate. To masters and scholars, let this be the general law. Let none who are desirous of instruction be prevented from resorting to what school they choose. It would be as unjust to exclude children, who are yet ignorant whither to go for instruction, from the best sources, as it would be to drive them by fear, and against their wills, to the religious rites of their country. And though it might be right to cure men of such madness even against their will, yet let indulgence be exercised towards all who are under such infatuation; for the ignorant should, in my opinion, not be punished, but instructed.

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No sensible man can peruse the above letter, or edict, without pronouncing it to be a puerile and contemptible piece of sophistry. It was evidently very absurd to charge the Christian teachers with inconsistency in imputing weakness and folly to paganism, and at the same time proposing to their pupils some of the works of pagan writers as the repositories of noble sentiments, and models of fine composition: this was very different from proposing them generally for adoption or imitation, or as authorities in religion, or pure morality. The edict is marked throughout with as much imbecility of argument as a purpose so ungenerous and paltry would naturally suggest. The heathens themselves despised it. Ammianus, Julian's own historian, has censured it with severity; and the Christian teachers in general gave up their chairs, rather than teach under the restrictions imposed by the edict. Jerome, in his Chronicle, says that Prohæresius, the Athenian sophist, shut up his school, though the emperor had granted to him a

special license to teach ; and Augustine records the same of Victorinus, who had taught rhetoric with great applause at Rome.<sup>19</sup>

In a letter to a friend he thus pleasingly describes a little farm, of which he makes him a present. It does not appear to whom the letter was written.

I present you with a little farm in Bithynia, which was a gift to me from my grandmother, as some return for your affectionate attachment to me,—not large enough, indeed, to give you a reputation for wealth or a brilliant fortune, but which will appear to be by no means without its attractions, when I shall have laid before you its particular advantages. I know I may venture, in the face of all your learning and elegance, to bring the lightest topics in a playful manner before you. To begin then. The farm is distant from the sea not more than twenty stadia, and neither trader nor the noisy vulgarity of sailors disturbs the quiet of the place ; and yet it is not destitute of the favours of the sea-god, for it can always supply a fresh and gasping fish. You have but to ascend a little hillock near the house, and thence you command a view of the Propontis and its islands, and also the city named from a noble prince.<sup>20</sup> In proceeding thither you do not tread on moss and sea weed, nor are you in the smallest degree annoyed by the nameless things which are thrown upon the shore and sands ; but you walk upon a fragrant surface of ivy, thyme, and odoriferous plants. It is delightful to recline here in quiet with one's book, and ever and anon to look off and enjoy the prospect of the ocean, and of the vessels riding upon it. It was to me, when a very young man, a charming retreat. It is well supplied with springs, a pleasant bath, garden, and orchard. When I grew up I still re-

<sup>19</sup> See the invectives poured by Gregory Naz. upon this edict :

Τίς ἔρμης σοι λόγιος, ὡς ἂν αὐτὸς ἱπποῖς, τοῖς ἐπὶ νοῦν ἡγάγε; τινὲς Τελχίνες πονηροὶ, καὶ βασκανοὶ δαίμονες; κ. τ. λ.

κατὰ Ἰουλιαν. Βασιλ. τ. η. β. π. 707.

<sup>20</sup> Probably Cyzicus may be meant, who was slain by Jason, and was king of the island which seems to have been called after his name.

tained my fondness for this scene of my early days. I visited it often, and my intercourse with it was not unattended with instruction.

There still remains upon this spot a humble monument of my husbandry; a little vine, producing a sweet and fragrant wine, which needs no keeping to acquire its flavour. You will have experience of its quality. The clusters, whether on the tree or in the winepress, emit a perfume like that of the rose. The must in the cask is like the nectar which Homer describes. You will ask why was not this vine multiplied by planting many acres with it? Perhaps I was not a very diligent husbandman. But in truth mine is the cup of a sober Bacchus, being generally supplied from the pure stream. I have only cared, therefore, to provide as much of this more generous beverage as might be wanted for myself, and for my small number of friends. I make this present to you, my friend, sensible that it is but little in itself, but valuable as coming from a friend to a friend; reminding us of the expression of Pindar, that truly wise poet, "from house to house."<sup>21</sup> I have written this letter in a hurried manner, by the light of my lamp; so that I must beg you not to read it with a critic's eye, or as one rhetorician examines another.

#### JULIAN TO THE PEOPLE OF BOSTRA.<sup>22</sup>

I THOUGHT the prelates of the Galileans would have felt themselves under greater obligation to me, than to him who preceded me in the administration of the empire. For in his reign many were banished and imprisoned; and great numbers of those whom they call heretics were put to death. In-somuch that in Samosata, Cyzicus, Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and many other countries, whole villages were laid waste, and levelled with the earth. In our reign just the reverse has taken place: for the banished were permitted to

<sup>21</sup> Ολυμπ. Οδ. vi. l. 167. Οδ. vii. l. 6. Οικοθεν οικαδε.

<sup>22</sup> Called Bozra in Scripture. The capital of ancient Idumea.



return ; and to those whose property had been confiscated, all has been restored by our edict. But to that height of fury and folly are these prelates arrived, that because they are no longer allowed to tyrannise, or to do those things to the injury of one another, or of us who piously worship the divinities, they are enraged and exasperated, and leave no stone unturned to excite the people to tumult and sedition : in which they manifest their impiety towards the gods, and their contumacious opposition to our edicts, humane as they are. We suffer none of them to be drawn against their will to our altars. We also publicly declare, that, if any are desirous to be partakers of our libations and lustrations, they must first offer sacrifices of expiation, and supplicate the gods, the averters of evil : so far are we from desiring to admit any of the irreligious into communion with our sacred rites, before they have purified their souls by supplications to the gods, and their bodies by legal ablutions. The populace, deluded by those they call their clergy, who are angry at their licence and impunity being withdrawn, are become openly tumultuous. For those who have up to this time been used to tyrannise, not satisfied with being unpunished for their past crimes, but ambitious of their former power, because they are not permitted any longer to act as magistrates, or to possess themselves of the estates of others, and transfer every thing to themselves, pull, so to speak, the ropes of sedition, and, as the proverb expresses it, add fire to fire, and scruple not to accumulate and aggravate, mischiefs, while they urge on the multitude to fresh commotions.

Wherefore I have thought fit to declare and make known to all the people, by this edict, that they must no longer unite with their clergy in seditions and tumults, nor suffer themselves to be persuaded to throw stones, and disobey their rulers. They are permitted to assemble themselves together when they please, and offer up such prayers as they have established for themselves : but if their clergy incite them to seditious commotions on their account, let them by no means assent to them, on pain of punishment.

I have deemed it proper to make this particular announcement to the state of Bostra, because the Bishop Titus and the clergy, in certain memorials which they have presented, have laid the whole blame upon the people, as being inclined of themselves to raise disturbances if they were not withheld by their admonitions. I have subjoined to this present edict the very words which, in the memorial abovementioned, the bishop has presumed to insert. "Though the Christians are not inferior in number to the Gentiles, they are restrained by our exhortations from being tumultuous." Such are the expressions used by the bishop concerning you. You see he intimates that your moderation does not arise from your own good disposition, but that you refrain in compliance with his exhortations. Wherefore consider him as your accuser, and as such drive him out of your city. Let the citizens among themselves maintain peace and unanimity. Let them not be at strife with, and do harm to each other; neither you that are in error to those who rightly and duly worship the gods with those ceremonies which have come down to us from the most ancient times; nor do you, the worshippers of the gods, do violence to or plunder the houses of those who err from ignorance rather than choice. Men should be persuaded and taught by argument and discourse, and not by blows, invectives, and corporal punishments. I therefore again and again admonish those who have voluntarily embraced the true religion, not in any manner to injure, or insult the Galileans. They are rather deserving of commiseration than hate, who are fatally misled in a matter of the deepest concern to them. For as piety is the greatest of all blessings, so is impiety the greatest evil. Such is their misfortune who turn themselves from the immortal gods to dead men and their relics. We pity the lot of those, who are in these unhappy circumstances; while we greatly congratulate those, who are freed and exempted by the gods from these errors.

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The noble author of the *Characteristics* has thought fit to

give us, in the third volume of that work, a translation of this letter, or edict, to the city of Bostra, to which he has subjoined the following specious compliment to its author. "Thus the generous and mild emperor, whom we may indeed call heathen, but not so justly apostate; since being, at different times of his youth, transferred to different schools or universities, and bred under tutors of each religion, as well heathen as Christian, he happened, when of full age, to make his choice, (though very unfortunately) in the former kind, and adhered to the ancient religion of his country and forefathers."

Thus coolly and philosophically does this noble writer hold the scales between the two religions, Heathen and Christian. If the latter persuasion receives at his hands some decent acknowledgment of superiority, he cannot be said to be deficient in courtesy to the venerable fanes of the ancient worship, which, though it was going fast out of fashion, yet was of power to retain, by its expiring grasp, the heart and understanding of a reasoning prince in devotion to its antiquated claims. Between the two rival creeds the mind of Lord Shaftesbury appeared hardly decided, most liberally allowing to all the full freedom of choice, as on a question to be wholly referred to the arbitrament of reason. But how his lordship could reconcile his omission of the entire passage relating to Titus, the bishop of Bostra, to his sense of equity, it is difficult to say. Titus appears, on the best testimony, to have been a learned divine, and an estimable man; and what the emperor in his edict declared concerning him to the citizens of Bostra, was evidently inserted for the purpose of incensing them against their bishop, and of bringing him under the chastisement of a mob: therefore, it seemed good to the noble translator to omit what was so little to the credit of the emperor. Alas! there is no difficulty in all this. Julian was himself a type of all that genus of intellectual men who will subscribe to no truths but those which come within the clear scope of their own reasoning faculties; in short, who reject revelation as such, where it has not the sanction of what they call experience, and is not reconcile-

able to their own pre-established opinions. Of this number probably was Lord Shaftesbury, and, perhaps, the learned historian in whose English pages Julian appears with so much advantage.

The men of this stamp will not receive Christianity as the only way of restitution for a helpless and fallen creature. It is not because they look upon the Deity as dishonoured by the scandal of the crucifixion, as might be the suggestion of a spurious sensibility, or a pious prejudice, but because they deem humanity to be unduly degraded by the supposed necessity for such a process of profound humiliation, that they refuse to bow to the mystery. But mystery it is, and must remain, nor is there any escape from it but by becoming involved in difficulties still more perplexing. Man may reason upon and about it, but he will only reason himself into confusion. Happily he is not called to struggle with that which is contrary to, but to acquiesce in that which is above his reason; and if the mind will not acquiesce, but will be wise above what is revealed, it must pay both its health and its wealth as the price of its unsanctified knowledge: nor will that idol release its hold upon its votaries until the renewed heart shall renounce its inheritance of pride, and the lords of that infected patrimony shall throw down their muniments at the foot of the cross.

Libanius was born at Antioch in the year n.c. 314, and according to Suidas, his father's name was Phasganus. We learn from his life of himself, which he says he wrote when he was sixty, that he attained his fiftieth year under Jovian, and his fifty-seventh under Valens. His grandfathers, on both sides, are said to have been persons equally distinguished by their rank and eloquence. His paternal grandfather, together with his brother Brasidas, was put to death by Diocletian, in the year 303. He was the second of three sons. From Antioch, where he began his studies, he went to Athens, and resided there for more than four years, and then proceeded to Constantinople, where he got in favour with Nicocles, a celebrated grammarian of Lacedæmon, who was a teacher of the Emperor Julian.

Returning to Athens, he was soon eminent at that resort of professors and students in rhetoric and philosophy. Here, however, he became the object of so much rivalry and opposition, that he found it expedient to leave the city, and to repair to Nicomedia, where his excellence in speaking became the theme of universal praise, and where he delivered those lectures and orations, which attracted the notice and approbation of the Emperor Julian. It was here that he formed a friendship with Aristænetus, and the five years passed by him in this city, which was at this time considered as the Athens of Bithynia, he called the 'spring time of his life.' His friend Aristænetus, who was Præfect of Bithynia, lost his life in the ruin caused by an earthquake, which happened at Nicomedia in the year 358.<sup>23</sup> He once more visited Constantino-

<sup>23</sup> The city of Nicomedia was called by Pliny 'a famous and beautiful city,' and by Ammianus 'the mother of all the cities of Bithynia,' and here the Roman Emperors resided when the affairs of the empire called them into the East. The great Constantine made Nicomedia his residence after he had retired from Rome, until Byzantium was completed for his reception. It is now a small village. Ammianus gives a dreadful representation of the fury and devastation of this earthquake, which burned the city in ruins. The carnage was frightful. Multitudes were crushed by the falling rafters, some were partially buried in the heaps of ashes, and a great many were shut in by the masses of timber and tiles, and died by famine. Aristænetus, the præfect, perished by a lingering and excruciating death. The epistles of Aristænetus are preserved, but they are of no great value. They are stuffed with passages from Plato, Lucian, and other writers, and as far as they may be called his own, they do no honour to his powers or his principles. They are little else than amorous puerilities.

Libanius mentions two monodies, (mournful songs, so called, because recited by one only on the stage, without the chorus,) which he wrote on occasion of this calamity, one relating to the city, and the other, it is presumed, to Aristænetus, the præfect, the first of which only remains. These productions are worthy only of being perused as specimens of the prevailing eloquence of the period to which our attention is now drawn. After a pompous description of the magnificence of Nicomedia, he calls the gods severely to account for suffering it to be thus destroyed. "After we had passed," says the mourning poet, "through the windings of the hills, when the city appeared at the distance of 150 stadia, on all other subjects a profound silence ensued, and, no longer engaged either by the towering branches of the gardens, or by the fruitfulness of the soil, or by the traffic of the sea, our whole conversation turned on Nicomedia."



ple, but again returned to Antioch, by permission of Gallus, Cæsar, for four months. Gallus being put to death, he finally fixed his residence at that city, and rose to the highest distinction as a sophist and rhetorician. He was much honoured by Julian, who gave him the honorary title of Quæstor, and wrote many letters to him, six of which are now only extant. He lived to an advanced age, and though sometimes the object of oppression and injurious treatment, of which he complains in his life of himself, was frequently very ser-

media. The form of the city so fascinating by its beauty, tyrannized over our eyes, and fixed their whole attention on itself. Similar were the sensations of him who had never seen it before, and of him who had grown old within its walls. One showed to his companion the palace, glittering over the bay; another the theatre embellishing the whole city. Revering it as a sacred city, we proceeded on our way to Chalcedon. It was necessary to make a turn, till the nature of the road deprived us of the spectacle. This seemed like the cessation of a feast. A city so great, so renowned, ought not the whole choir of the gods to have surrounded, and protected, exhorting each other to decree, that it should never be subjected to any calamity? But now some of you have deceived, others have deserted, and none have assisted her. All that I have enumerated once were, but no longer are. What a beautiful lock has fortune severed from the world! How has she blinded the other continent by thus depriving it of its illustrious eye! What a deplorable deformity has she inflicted upon Asia! " . . . . The day had almost advanced to noon. The tutelar deities of the city abandoned the temples, she was left like a ship deserted by its crew. The lord of the trident shook the earth, and convulsed the ocean; the foundations of the city were disunited; walls were thrown on walls; pillars on pillars; and roofs fell headlong. What had been hidden was revealed, and what had appeared was hidden. Statues perfect in beauty, and complete in every part, were blended by the concussion in one confused mass. Artificers, working at their trades, were dashed out of their shops and houses. The theatre involved in ruins all that were in it. " . . . . O all-seeing sun, what were thy sensations on seeing this? Why didst thou not prevent such a city from leaving the earth? For the oxen profaned by the famished mariners, thy resentment was such as to threaten the celestial powers that thou wouldst give thyself up to Pluto, (Hom. Odyss. xii.) but for the glory of the earth, for the labour of many kings, for this fruit of prodigious cost, destroyed in the day-time, thou hast had no compassion." It is probable this was the usual strain of the eloquence of this celebrated sophist, and of the rhetoric by which the students and candidates for literary laurels and academical preferment in this doting age of Rome, were captivated. Libanius was the master spirit of that period.

viceable to the city of Antioch in reconciling to them the emperors Julian and Theodosius. It has been inferred from some of his works, that he was in existence in the reign of Arcadius. His writings, which have been preserved, are very numerous. We have orations composed and delivered by him, and some disputations and declamations, not made to be spoken in public. Of his epistles, doubtless, a great number are still undiscovered, but very many remain, and in this kind of composition, he was thought by his contemporaries greatly to excel.<sup>24</sup> I have in another place alluded to the opinion of Gibbon, concerning the worth of these epistles.

The epistle of Libanius to the Emperor Julian, in behalf of one of his friends, is pleasingly written, and indicates a mutual confidence very creditable to both parties to the correspondence.

#### LIBANIUS TO JULIAN.

WE have made a mutual agreement that I should write to you in behalf of my friends, and that if their requests are reasonable, you will assist them. Of this promised assistance let Hyperechius first reap the advantage. He has long been harassed and oppressed by those whose chief study is unjust gain. He was one of my scholars in my former prosperity. Such I deem the time of my residence at Nicomedia; not on account of the wealth, but of the excellent friends, that it procured me, many of whom are no more. This man, whose hopes now rest on you, then came from Ancyra. In eloquence none excelled him; in manners none equalled him. I love

<sup>24</sup> John Christopher Wolfius, assisted by the collections of John Frederick Rostgaard, a Danish nobleman, published at Hamburgh, in one volume, folio, 1738, 1605 epistles of Libanius, Greek and Latin, from various MSS. with notes; to which were added 522, collected in Greece, about the middle of the fifteenth century, by Francis Zambian, of Bologna; and published in his Latin translation only by John Somerfield, at Cracowen, 1504. It has been suggested by Wolfius, at least, as a point worthy of consideration, that Libanius might have been the fabricator of the epistles of Phalaris. He states himself to have frequently compared the phrases and expressions of Phalaris with those of Libanius. Bentley, however, has no such conjecture.

him, therefore, with a parental affection. I cannot see him injured without assisting him myself, and urging others to assist him also. And if in this you think I act no bad part, show by what you do, that you approve of my conduct.

The terms on which Libanius lived with the Emperor Julian, may be collected from the two following brief epistles

JULIAN TO LIBANIUS.<sup>65</sup>

You have made an adequate return to Aristophanes,<sup>66</sup> for his piety to the gods, and his affection for you, by making what was formerly a disgrace to him redound to his glory, not only in the present time, but in the time to come; as the calumny of Paul,<sup>67</sup> and the sentence of that judge can by no means be compared with your orations. For such fiery proceedings were instantly detested, and together with their authors, are now extinct; while your orations delight the true Greeks of the present age, and unless I am much mistaken, will also delight their posterity. Be assured that you have convinced me, or rather that you have induced me to retract my opinion of Aristophanes, and that I think him superior to all the allurements both of profit and pleasure. Can I refuse to concur with the most philosophical of orators, the greatest partisan of truth? After this, perhaps, you may ask, why we have not placed his affairs in a more prosperous state, and removed every inconvenience attending his disgrace. When two their efforts join,<sup>68</sup> &c. You and I will confer together. For you are worthy to be consulted, not only as to the propriety of assisting a man who devoutly honours the gods, but also in what

<sup>65</sup> *Ἰουλιανὸς Ἀυτοκράτωρ Λιβανίῳ τῷ Σοφιστῇ χάριν.*

<sup>66</sup> A Corinthian, in defence of whom, there is an oration of Libanius in the second volume of Morell's edition.

<sup>67</sup> This Paul has been stigmatised by Julian, as a notorious slanderer in the preceding reign of Constantius. He was burned alive soon after the accession of Julian. He had pleaded for the informers against Aristophanes, before Constantius. It seems from the oration of Libanius, that Aristophanes was cruelly beaten with thongs having leaden bullets at the end of them.

<sup>68</sup> *Συν τε ἐν' ἀρχομένοις, κ. τ. λ.* *Iliad.* xi. 224.

manner ; of which, indeed, you have given some hints. But of these matters it will be better, perhaps, to discourse than to write. Farewell, my most dear and beloved brother.

## LIBANIUS TO JULIAN.

ALAS ! alas ! how insatiable is your desire of farther attainments ! You possess the palm of eloquence, snatched from others ; at once

*A matchless prince, and a most potent sage.<sup>29</sup>*

Other princes have acted, and we applauded, but you excel in both these capacities. For how can we speak so highly of your actions, as you do of that short composition ? Hence I conjecture what you will do, when you have subdued Phœnicia :<sup>30</sup> as already you administer justice to your subjects, wage war with the Barbarians, and in the composition of orations far surpass others. Though I am not solicitous as to the future, I shall be as much pleased with this defeat as with a victory. For when the vanquished and the victor are friends, the vanquished participates in the triumph ; as friends, it is said, have all things in common.

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In this letter-writing period, we have also the epistolary compositions of Basil and Gregory Nazianzen, both men of great intellects, and true devotional spirits. Basil, whose learning and piety gained him the title of Great, derived his descent from an ancient and honourable race, both on his father's and mother's side. His birth-place was Neocæsarea, a city of Pontus, or Cappadocia Pontica, where he was educated by his parents, and where he spent a considerable part of his life. Under the Maximinian persecution, one of the last and hottest of the efforts of declining paganism, his paternal ancestors fled to one of the woody mountains of Pontus, where they en-

<sup>29</sup> Ἀρχὼν τ' ἀγαθός, κρατερός τε σοφίῃς, alluding to the line in Homer's *Iliad*. Ἀμφοτέρου βασιλεὺς τ' ἀγαθός, κρατερός τ' αἰχμητής. *Il.* iii. 178.

<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the orators of Phœnicia.

dured great privations. Basil owed much of his education to his mother Emmelia and his grandmother Macrina, which he acknowledges with gratitude in more than one of his epistles. He studied at Antioch under Libanius, and from Antioch he proceeded to Cæsarea in Palestine, then famous for its schools of learning, and where he soon surpassed all his fellow-students. From Cæsarea he removed to Constantinople, and, after studying there under eminent professors, he repaired to Athens, where he met again his former friend and school-fellow, Gregory of Nazianzus, with whom a cordial and affectionate intimacy here commenced, which continued to the end of their lives. He pursued his studies here with the assistance of Himerius and Proæresius, two of the celebrated orators and sophists at that time in Athens; both high in the esteem and favour of the Emperor Julian. The latter, an Armenian, had all the youth of Cappadocia and Bithynia for his scholars, and was honoured with a statue of brass at Rome. From Athens, Basil returned to Antioch, and here put the last polish to his preparative studies under Libanius, with whom he formed an intimacy which produced a frequent interchange of letters between them. Here he practised oratory and pleaded at the forum with great applause; but soon grew weary of these pursuits, and betook himself wholly and finally to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and the expositions of theologians, especially those of Origen. After some time spent in these avocations, he set out on his further travels. At Alexandria, in Egypt, he conversed much with monks and hermits, whose strict and devoted lives he much admired, and afterwards copied. Having finished his travels in Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, he settled, for some time, at Cæsarea.<sup>21</sup> But having some disagreement with Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, he retired to a sequestered place near Neocæsarea.

<sup>21</sup> The Emperor Julian had been a fellow student of Basil's at Athens, and is said to have written a letter to him while at Cæsarea, to invite him to his court, to which invitation he returned a refusal. It is probable that in this correspondence they debated on some points of religion, which might have drawn from Julian this magisterial censure. *Ἀνέγνων, ἔγνων, καταέγνων.* What you have written I have read, considered, and condemned. To which Basil re-



Being unable to settle there in quiet, he sought a deeper retirement in the mountainous parts of Pontus, near the river Iris, and invited Nazianzen to come to him there, who came accordingly to him, but not till he had answered his invitation by several very facetious and playful letters. Here Basil became enamoured of the monastic life, and drew up, in concert with Gregory, many rules for the conduct of these institutions, which were adopted throughout the Eastern Church. After the death of Eusebius he was made bishop of Cæsarea, and, there, after much ill-treatment, from the Emperor Valens, and others, and enduring many calumnies and persecutions, he ended his memorable life in the year 379.

As examples of the merit of Basil in this species of writing, the following are deserving of attention.

#### BASIL TO LIBANIUS.

I AM ashamed to send you our Cappadocian youths one by one, instead of at once inducing all who are old enough to profit by sound discipline, and instruction in rhetoric and polite learning, to resort to you as the master and guide of their studies. But as it is impossible to pick out at once all who understand their own best interests, and what most becomes them, I must dispatch them to you one at a time, as I find them, considering that I am conferring a favour upon them, not unlike that which those bestow upon the thirsty

torted, *Ανθρώπος, οὐκ εὖνως. εἰ γὰρ εὖνως. οὐκ αὖ κατένυνος.* You have read, but not understood, for had you understood, you would not have condemned. The fragment of an epistle to Julian, extant in the acts of the second Nicene council, wherein Basil gives the Emperor a brief account of his faith, contains an express acknowledgment of the invocation of saints, and the worship of images; but both the phrase and matter were so contrary to Basil's genuine style and doctrine, as to proclaim it a counterfeit. No passage to such an effect was ever, by any Greek writer, imputed to Basil, nor was ever heard of till Pope Adrian, (the great patron of image-worship,) in a letter, brought it by his Legates to the said Synod. None of the fathers seem to have been more ruled and circumscribed in his opinions by the word and authority of the Holy Scriptures, than Basil. He had, however, some peculiar notions.

who conduct them to the pure fountains. He who now comes to you will, in a little time, be respected and sought after for his own sake, when he shall have had the advantage of your instructions; but his present importance is borrowed from his father, a man of the highest repute among us for his integrity in private life, and his prudence in state affairs. He has honoured me personally with the most exalted proofs of his attachment, in return for which I do this present kindness to his son, in introducing him to your acquaintance,—an act of which they who know and feel what is most honourable and excellent in character, will be the best qualified to understand the value.

## BASIL TO LIBANIUS.

WHAT is not within the compass of a sophist to achieve by his art; whose art it professedly is to reduce to littleness what is lofty when it pleases him, and to give importance to little things when such is his object; of which two-fold talent you have given a conspicuous proof in your correspondence with me; for that poor specimen of an epistle which I last wrote to you, (for such to you, who cultivate with so much pains and success the graces of composition, it must appear,) and which was, in truth, not a whit more bearable than that which you now receive from me, you have so magnified by your description of it, as to make it seem as if your own talent was inferior to mine in letter-writing. Your dealing with me is like that of kind fathers in their games and sports with their children, who, for the sake of encouraging in them a spirit of emulation and thirst for superiority, suffer them, by an innocent deceit, to be victorious. In truth, I cannot express in adequate terms the gratification you afford me by this flattering illusion; which is just as if Milo or Polydamas were to decline contending with me in the contest of the Palæstra or Pancratium.

## LIBANIUS TO BASIL.

If you had studied for a long time in what manner you could best vindicate the correctness of what my letters have said in praise of yours, you could not have more effectually accomplished your object than by writing as you have just now done to me. You give me the title of sophist, which title belongs to one who must be capable of handling his subjects so as to make small things great, and great things small; and you affirm, that it has been my object to represent as elegant your former inelegant epistle, which was, in truth, not a whit better than that which you had just sent me; in a word, you contend that you are utterly incapable of writing well; that the books professing to give instruction in that art, do not convey it; and that what had formerly been imparted to you on that subject had entirely slipped out of your memory. But in making out this case, you have pronounced sentence against yourself in terms so elegant, that those who have been present at the perusal of them felt themselves, as it were, fixed to the spot till they were finished. While you are endeavouring to disparage your former letter, by saying that it is like the last you wrote to me, you are not aware that you are pronouncing its eulogy. I cannot, therefore, help admiring your simplicity in this respect; for, to accredit your statement, you ought to have written another kind of letter than that which you have last written: but to gain credence to an untruth would not have been consistent with your character and habits; and you certainly would have practised a species of fraud if you had done violence to your excellent taste and judgment by writing ineloquently or defectively, or neglected to put in use those powers with which you are furnished. And, indeed, had you never exercised your ingenuity in disparaging what is really commendable, to avoid being classed among the sophists, your genius would not have shown itself in all the variety of its powers. I do not find fault with you for the pleasure you take in the perusal of books which

possess substantial merit without the recommendation of an elegant diction. But, do what you will, the rules of composition which you have heard from me, and which your own taste has completed, are fixed, and will remain fixed in your mind as long as you draw your breath; nor will they ever cease to flourish there, even though you should cease to cultivate them.

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The letters between Basil and Libanius are many of them in a light complimentary strain, and composed in the modern fashion of playful reciprocity, as in the following specimens.

LIBANIUS TO BASIL.

You have not, it seems, laid aside your indignation, so that I hold my pen in a trembling hand. If you have forgiven me, why not write to me? If you retain your angry feeling towards me, which is a supposition not to be entertained of any wise man, and least of you, how, when you remind others, in your sermons, of the scriptural precept, not to let the sun go down upon your wrath, can you preserve yours through the rising and setting of many suns? You are bent upon punishing me, and you effect your purpose well by depriving me of that intercourse which is so pleasing to me. But do not so deal with me, my generous friend; be more benignant, and permit me still to enjoy the golden products of your erudite tongue.

BASIL TO LIBANIUS.

Those who take pleasure in the beauty of the rose are said not to be offended with its thorns from which the flowers spring into life. And I have heard from one speaking on this subject, either jestingly or seriously, that nature has made the case of the rose resemble that of lovers as to the stimulus given to the affections by the infliction of a certain degree of

gentle pain. But why do I borrow this illustration from the rose? You will find the answer to this question in your own writings. They sometimes pierce me with reproaches and accusations, but the pain they produce, like that of the prickles of the rose's stem, cause within me a certain sense of delight, and excite in my bosom more ardent emotions of friendship.

## LIBANIUS TO BASIL.

IF such things proceed from your tongue when it moves without effort, what may not be expected from it when it is in full and vigorous exercise; for what rivers can be compared to that copious eloquence that issues from your mouth. But as to myself, without daily supplies the source is dry, and my refuge is in silence.

## BASIL TO LIBANIUS.

THAT I do not cultivate a more frequent commerce with your stored and communicative mind is to be imputed to a conscious timidity; but that *you* should be so resolutely silent, is a fact not admitting of apology. If you continue to shew yourself so reluctant to correspond with me, will it not be considered as a mark of the indifference with which you regard me. He who has so ready an elocution must have equal ease in expressing himself on paper. If the possessor of such talents is silent, it can only be a consequence of his pride or forgetfulness. You shall, however, be assailed by my letters in revenge for your taciturnity. For the present, farewell, my honoured friend. Write when it pleases you; or, rather than do what is disagreeable to you, write not at all.

## SAME TO SAME.

ALL those by whom I am at present surrounded speak with the highest admiration of the excellence of your last achievement in oratory. They declare it to have been a splendid speci-



men. It was something so magnificent, they say, that all men ran together to hear it, so that it seemed as if there were none in the city but the speaking Libanius and the listening crowd. No one could bear to be absent from the scene, neither magistrates, nor military men, nor artificers. Even women hastened to the forum to witness the display. What, then, was the exhibition that drew together such a crowd, and engrossed the whole attention of the public? It was an oratory characterized rather by a correctness of style than ambitious elevation; which, in short, has been so admired and extolled that I must beg you to send it to me without delay, that I may join my voice to this universal chorus of praise; for if Libanius is with me an object of admiration, independently of this his great performance, what will be my rapture when I have in my hands this fresh proof of his excellence.

The correspondence between these persons, so distinguished in their day, is an example decisive of the credit and importance which the composition of letters had reached at the period in which it took place. The interchange of eulogy by which the letters between them were characterized, exhibit a taste and spirit which we cannot altogether admire, though Basil, deservedly called great, on other accounts, was a party to the correspondence. It took place at an early period of Basil's life, soon after his emerging from the tuition of the great sophist; and it was, probably, the want of a real correspondence in their minds that made their letters require the support of a traffic in compliment.

#### BASIL TO HIS FRIEND GREGORY.

THOUGH my brother wrote to me to say that you had been long wishing to see me, and had purposed so to do, yet my frequent disappointments having made me very distrustful of these promises, and being, besides, harassed by many distracting occupations, it became impossible for me to remain in suspense any longer. I must now bend my course towards

Pontus, where, if God permit, I hope shortly to bring my wanderings to an end. Having, not without some struggle, dismissed the delusive hopes which I had fixed on you, for which "waking dreams" were perhaps a better term, I set out on my journey to Pontus in search of the sort of life I had proposed to myself. On my way thither, God shewed me a place just such as I was in want of; so that the vision with which we were wont so often to amuse ourselves in our playful moods and vacant hours, and which has so often been pictured on our imaginations, has been at length realized. It is a hill covered with a thick grove, having its base on the north washed with cold transparent streams. A plain lies stretched out beneath it, kept in perpetual verdure by the mountain torrents. The fields are encircled and fenced in by a wood of spontaneous growth, with every variety of trees. Calypso's island itself would suffer by a comparison with this place, vaunted as it was by Homer for its unrivalled beauty. And, indeed, the place I am describing may be considered as a sort of island, being cut off from the country about it by this natural rampart; on two sides of which runs a deep ravine. On one side of this, the river replenished by the upland springs, forms a perpetual barrier to keep out intrusion. On the other side, the projection of the hill forms a curvature like the crescent moon, which, in conjunction with the ravines, completes on that side also the natural fortification; and through it there is one only avenue to the mountain, of which we may be said to be masters. The site of the dwelling-house is another crag jutting out from the top of the hill, from which the eye commands the whole expanse of country, with its fine circumfluent river, not inferior, in my opinion, to the river Strymon, in beautiful effect, as viewed from the city of Amphipolis. The Strymon flows so leisurely on, that it seems more like a lake than a river; while this, of all the rivers I know, is the rapidest in its course. It dashes against the rocky base, and from thence rebounding is rolled round into the deep vortex below.<sup>35</sup> Our

<sup>35</sup> Εἰς λίαν βαθύαν περιπίπτει.

river turns towards me the loveliest aspect imaginable; while to the dwellers in the vicinity, it is of substantial utility, as it nourishes in its foamy current a surprising quantity of fish.

Why should I dwell upon the fragrant airs that sweep along these verdant lawns, or the breezes that visit us from the river? It is for others to admire the profusion of the flowers and the music of the singing birds, but for me there is hardly leisure to recreate myself with these delights; and if I add, by way of completing the picture, to the other advantages of the situation, its favourable position for the production of every sort of fruit, let me at the same time especially remark, that it affords to myself what is of more value than all the fruits in the world,—tranquillity, not only by its distance from the city, with its strife and noise, but because it is so sequestered that no traveller visits it, save those who are in search of game. You have your bears and wolves, but *we* know of no other herds but those of deer, and hares, and mountain goats. Do you not think, after having this description of my sojourn, that I should be most unwise to exchange it for a place of peril like that sink of the world, Tiberene. You will surely pardon my haste to return to the place I have been describing. Thus Alcmaeon, when he had found Echinadæ, would no longer bear to be a wanderer.

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The following letter, written by Basil when in the solitudes of Cæsarea, to his friend Gregory, will shew what this great father of the church considered to be the course of life most agreeable to the spirit of the gospel, and most suitable to the Christian vocation.

#### BASIL TO GREGORY.<sup>33</sup>

I KNEW again your letter as men discover the children of their friends, by the likeness they bear to their parents; for when

<sup>33</sup> I cannot refuse myself the gratification of contrasting with this letter of the great Basil, a portion of a letter of the late Rev. John Newton, leaving the reader to decide between the opposite views of these very different persons.

I find you saying that my description of my abode excited in you no desire to come and live as I do, before you were made

and to say whether the portraiture from the hand of the plain pastor of the parish of Saint Mary Woolnoth, or that which is above produced from the great Christian guide of the fourth century, which some consider as the most flourishing state of the Christian church, is most entitled to be copied by the humble and devout Christian.

DEAR SIR,

In the passage alluded to, Romans xii. 2, I suppose the Apostle means the men of the world, in distinction from believers; these not having the love of God in their hearts, or his fear before their eyes, are of course engaged in such pursuits and practices as are inconsistent with our holy calling, and which we cannot imitate or comply with, without hurting our peace and profession. We are, therefore, bound to avoid conformity to them in all such instances; but we are not obliged to decline all intercourse with the world, or to impose restraints upon ourselves when the Scripture does not restrain us, in order to make ourselves as unlike the world as possible. To instance in a few particulars: It is not necessary, perhaps it is not lawful, wholly to renounce the society of the world. A mistake of this kind took place in the early ages of Christianity, and men (at first perhaps with a sincere desire of serving God without distraction) withdrew into deserts and uninhabited places, and wasted their lives at a distance from their fellow-creatures. But unless we could flee from ourselves likewise, this would afford us no advantage: so long as we carry our own hearts with us we shall be exposed to temptation, go where we will. Besides, this would be thwarting the end of our vocation. Christians are to be the salt and the light of the world, conspicuous as cities set upon a hill: they are commanded to "let their light shine before men, that they, beholding their good works, may glorify their Father who is in heaven." This injudicious deviation from the paths of Nature and Providence, gave occasion at length to the vilest abominations; men who withdrew from the world under the pretence of retirement, became the more wicked and abandoned as they lived more out of public view and observation.

Diligence and fidelity in the management of temporal concerns, though observable in the practice of many worldly men, may be maintained without a sinful conformity to the world. Neither are we required to refuse a moderate use of the comforts and conveniences of life, suitable to the station to which God has appointed us in this world. The spirit of self-righteousness and worship works much in this way, and supposes that there is something excellent in long fastings, in abstaining from pleasant food, in wearing meaner clothes than is customary with those in the same rank of life, and in many other austerities and singularities not commanded by the word of God. And many persons who are in the main sincere, are grievously burthened with

acquainted with my habits and way of living, I recognized that character of your mind, which reckons all things here as nothing worth in comparison with that blessedness which is

scruples respecting the use of lawful things. It is true there is need of a constant watch, lest what is lawful in itself become hurtful to us by its abuse. But this outward strictness may be carried to a great length, without a spark of true grace, and even without the knowledge of the true God. . . . . A man may starve his body to feed his pride: but to those who fear and serve the Lord, "every creature is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." Notwithstanding these limitations, the precept is very extensive and important, "Be not conformed to the world." As believers, we are strangers and pilgrims in the world. Heaven is our country, and the Lord is our King. . . . . We must not conform to the spirit of the world. As members of society we have a part to act in it in common with others. But if our business is the same, our principles and ends are to be entirely different. Diligence in our respective callings is, as I have already observed, commendable, and our duty; but not with the same views which stimulate the activity of the men of the world. A Christian is to pursue his lawful calling with an eye to the providence of God, and with submission to His wisdom.

We must not conform to the maxims of the world. The world, in various instances, calls evil good, and good evil. We are to have recourse to the law and the testimony, and to judge of things by the unerring word of God, uninfluenced by the determination of the great, or the many. We are to obey God rather than man, though upon this account we may expect to be despised or reviled, and to be made a gazing-stock or a laughing-stock to those who set his authority at defiance. We must bear our testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, avow the cause of his despised people, and walk in the practice of universal obedience, patiently endure reproaches, and labour to overcome evil with good. Thus we shall shew that we are not ashamed of him; and there is an hour coming when he will not be ashamed of us, who have followed him, in the midst of a perverse generation; but will own our worthless names before the assembled world. . . . . It is our duty to redeem time, to walk with God, to do all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to follow the example which he has set us when he was upon earth, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. It must, of course, be our duty to avoid a conformity with the world in those vain and sensual diversions, which stand in as direct contradiction to a spiritual frame of mind, as darkness to light."

Though in comparing these manuals of Christian duty, I cannot but greatly prefer, as a whole, the sound sense and moderation which characterise Mr. Newton's piety, and practical divinity, I am far, very far, from disputing the claim of many of the great Basil's precepts to the homage and admiration of the humble believer.



laid up for us in promises. I blush, however, to relate to you what I myself am doing day and night in this sequestered nook. It is true, I left my occupations in the city, as ministering occasion to unnumbered evils; but *myself* I have not yet been able to relinquish. I resemble persons at sea, who, being little accustomed to a voyage, and ready to die with the nausea it occasions, are angry with the size of the vessel in which they are so tossed about, and betake themselves, therefore, to the little boat or skiff. But they are still as sick and disordered as they were before: discomfort and disgust still go along with them. Something like this is my condition. For still carrying with me the same susceptibility, I am everywhere attended by the like perturbations. So that I gained nothing very considerable from coming into this wilderness. But if we do what we ought, and follow in the track of Him who leadeth us unto salvation (for if any one, saith He, will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me), we must do our utmost to keep the mind sedate and tranquil. For as the eye, which is ever rolling itself about, one while glancing sideways, and then again moving itself quickly from things above to things below, can see nothing distinctly, the spectator's vision requiring to be fastened to its object to see it clearly and perfectly; so, whilst the mind of man is distracted by a thousand worldly cares, it is impossible he should have a distinct perception of the truth. If we are free from the matrimonial bonds, strong and inordinate desires, appetites, and affections agitate the mind: and marriage, on the other hand, brings with it a crowd of cares. If without children, there is the desire of children; if a family, there is the care of their education. Then there is the protection of one's wife, the regulations of the house, the ordering of the servants, losses, disputes with neighbours, lawsuits, the dangers of merchandize, the fatigues of husbandry. Every day brings, as it comes, some cloud of its own upon the soul; and the nights, taking up the cares of the day, still hold the mind under the same delusions. From these evils there is but one escape—separation from the world

entirely. But then retirement from the world is not to be out of oneself in relation to the body, but to have the soul detached from sympathy with the body, and to become cityless, houseless, moneyless, companionless, without possessions, without livelihood, without business, without society, ignorant of human sciences, and to have room in the heart for the lessons of Divine teaching. But this preparation of the heart consists in the unlearning of our knowledge, the fruit of evil custom, by which the heart has been pre-occupied. We cannot write upon the wax until the characters already written there have been previously obliterated. Nor can we fix divine doctrines in the soul before we have cleared out of the way what evil habit has previously established there. Now to the attainment of this end the solitude of the wilderness furnishes the greatest possible advantage, inasmuch as it tranquillizes the passions, and gives opportunity to reason to dismiss them from the soul. Just as the wild beasts are most easily subdued when they are soothed and stroked, so lusts, evil tempers, fears, and griefs, which are like poison to the soul, when softened down by quiet treatment, and not exasperated by provocation, are the more easily brought under by the power of reason. To promote those objects, the place of one's retreat must be such as that I have chosen,—cut off from communication with mankind, so that the course of spiritual exercises may be uninterrupted by any external objects. Pious employments feed the soul with divine thoughts. What happier employment can there be than to follow the example of angels; commencing prayer with the dawn of the day, and with hymns and spiritual songs honouring the Creator? Then, as the day advances, to resort to our employments, carrying our prayers everywhere about with us, and with hymns, as with salt, seasoning our employments. Our hymns are our solace, and convey to us the blessings of a cheerful and contented mind. Quiet is the first step towards the purification of the soul, when there is not a tongue to speak of the affairs of men, nor eyes that are under the temptation of gazing upon comely forms and fair complexions. When the ear enervates not the

vigour of the soul by listening to seducing songs, or to the loose talk of jesters and buffoons, which is especially fraught with mischievous effects. For the mind, when undisturbed by outward objects, retires into itself, and, through itself, ascends to meditation upon God; and being penetrated and irradiated by the light of that beautiful object, the man attains to a forgetfulness of his natural condition. Nor is his soul debased by the cares or concerns of food or raiment: but, enjoying an exemption from all earthly solitudes, its entire energies are bestowed on the acquisition of eternal blessings;—on the enquiry how temperance, and fortitude, may be established in the bosom,—how justice, and prudence, and the rest of the virtues, which, being under one or other of these general heads, teach a serious man how to rule and govern every action of his life. But the great guide of life is meditation on the inspired Scriptures. For in them are to be found directions for the conduct, and the lives of blessed men, there recorded and transmitted, are placed before us as living pictures of godly conversation and holy actions for our imitation. Whatsoever defects a man may find in himself, let him ponder on that book till he draws out of it, as from a kind of medical repository, a remedy suitable to his disease. Thus he who is in quest of temperance sets continually before him the history of Joseph, and learns from him the actions wherein temperance consists; finding him not merely continent as to pleasure, but with a mind habituated to virtue. Again, he learns fortitude from Job, who not only remained unaltered under a sad reverse of circumstances, becoming, in an instant, poor from being rich, and a childless man from having a fair family, but possessed his mind in constant contentedness; not exasperated when the friends who came to comfort him pressed hard upon him, and assailed him with invectives. If any one, again, be thinking how, in the same act, he may at once be meek and magnanimous, angry at sin, but meek towards the sinner, he will find in David the man of prowess in arms, but gentle, placid, and unresentful towards his private enemies. Such a man, too, was Moses,

rising up with a burst of indignation when men sinned against the Lord, but sustaining in a spirit of meekness his own ill usage. And as the painters of animals are always in the habit, when they draw from copies, of looking often to the original picture, and labour to transfer the spirit of their pattern to their own performance, so should he who endeavours to perfect himself in all the characteristics of virtue, look off to the lives of the saints, as to a kind of moving and acting images, and make their good qualities their own by imitation. Prayer, again, succeeding to the reading of the Scriptures, makes the soul fresher and more vigorous; stirring it up to a holy longing after God. Now that is the right sort of prayer which brings the notion of God vividly to the soul: and this is the indwelling of God, the having God seated within us by keeping up a constant recollection of Him. In this way we become the temples of God, when our habitual recollection of Him is uninterrupted by earthly cares, and when the mind is not disturbed by sudden emotions. The lover of God, shunning all these things, retreats to Him, and banishing all that might prompt him to inordinate affections, spends his time in the pursuits which lead to virtue.

Above all things, it behoves him not to be ignorant of the right use of speech, but to enquire undisputably, and to answer unambitiously, not interrupting the speaker when making useful observations, nor seeking to thrust in one's own remarks for the sake of display. We must set bounds to ourselves both in speaking and hearing. We should never blush to learn, nor ever be reluctant to teach. And if we have gained any instruction from another, we ought not to conceal it, as worthless women do when they tell untruths about their spurious offspring, but candidly acknowledge the true father of our information. In the tone of our voice a medium is desirable; we should take care, on the one hand, not to be inaudible through indistinctness, and on the other, not to raise the voice to such a pitch as to be offensive to our hearers; nor ever utter any thing before we have well thought it over. We should salute courteously the friends we meet, and make

ourselves agreeable to those with whom we converse; not seeking to amuse men by facetiousness, but adopting a kind and gentle way of giving our advice. In all cases where it is incumbent upon us to rebuke, we should avoid harshness of expression. You will always be more acceptable to those who need to be set right by you, if you begin by humbly speaking of your own faults. The style of reproof adopted by the Prophet is often desirable, who, on the occasion of David's sin, did not prescribe of himself the extent of punishment the sin deserved; but, by introducing a fictitious character, made him the judge of his own sin. So that having, in the first instance, passed sentence on himself, he had no room afterwards to complain of his reprover. But the concomitants of a humble and dejected frame of mind should be a sad and cast down countenance, a neglected person, untrimmed hair, soiled raiment; so that what mourners do from the duty of relationship should appear in us a spontaneous act.

The tunic should be bound to the body with a girdle, but not above the waist, for that is woman-like; nor should it be so as to let the garment hang loosely, for that is slovenly. The pace at which we walk should not be sluggish, agreeing with the character of an enervated mind; nor should it be impetuous and strutting, so as to indicate a froward disposition. There should be but one object aimed at in our dress—to have a sufficient covering for the body, both in winter and in summer. In the colour of our garments we should not aim at what is gaudy; nor in the quality and fashion of it should we seek what is delicate and soft; for to be careful about the colour of our dress is to act like women anxious to set themselves off by colours not their own, dying their cheeks and hair with paint. But the tunic ought to be of such a thickness as not to need a superaddition for the sake of greater warmth. The shoes should be cheap, in point of price, but answering sufficiently the purpose. And as in all parts of the dress we should consider only what is absolutely necessary, so bread will satisfy the hunger, and water will suffice for the thirst, of a man in health. Viands derived from the seeds of the



ground are sufficient to keep up our strength of body for all necessary purposes. We must refuse to gratify a voracious appetite; content to keep the body under the control of temperance and moderation: and at our meals and recreations we should have the mind occupied with thoughts of God. We should make the very quality of our food, and the sustentation of the body which receives it, an occasion of thanksgiving. What various kinds of food, adapted to the peculiar structure of the different bodies, have been provided by the Administrator of all things! Let the prayers which are offered before meat be worthy of God's providential gifts, both those which He furnishes for our present use, and those which He hath laid up in store for our future need. Let our prayers after meat express our thankfulness for what has been bestowed, and our request for mercies still in promise. Let there be one stated hour for meals, regularly observed as the time comes round, and so passed that out of a day of twenty-fours scarcely even this hour should be expended on the body. The remainder is taken up by the ascetic in mental exercises. The sleep should be light, and easily disturbed, following naturally the proportion of the diet, and interrupted purposely by meditations on important matters. The giving way to a lethargic slumber, the limbs being all unstrung, so as to afford opportunity to unseasonable fancies, inflicts on those who thus sleep a daily death. But what the dawn of day is to others, the midnight is to those who are the ascetic followers of piety; since the silence of the night presents the soul with the best leisure for its exercises, when neither eyes nor ears are transmitting to the heart any hurtful sounds or sights; but the soul, alone and by itself, is present with its God, and is disciplining itself by calling its sins to its remembrance, prescribing rules to itself for avoiding what is evil, and seeking God's co-operation for the performance of those things which it is bent upon fulfilling.

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Gregory, surnamed Theologus, or the divine, was born at Nuzianzus in Cappadocia Propria, or Magna, distinguished

by being so called from Cappadocia Pontica, simply designated by the name of Pontus,—the son of parents greatly venerated for their virtues. His father sprung from heathen parents, abjured his errors, and became the pastoral bishop of the church at Nazianzus. The story of his mother's praying for a son, and vowing at the altar to dedicate him to the service of God, may or may not be true, but that she took all a Christian mother's pains to prepare and qualify him to labour efficaciously in that holy cause, is a fact which his own testimony has placed beyond doubt.<sup>30</sup> After an infancy passed in studies and occupations far above his years, he entered upon his travels, and having visited the resorts of studious men, and profited under various teachers and professors, he came at length to Athens, the great seat and emporium of literature and philosophy, and there began the close and affectionate intimacy between him and Basil, which continued as long as they were both in existence upon the earth. Their studies, pursuits, and hopes were directed to the same ends, animated by the same motives, and cherished and cemented by the similarity of their tastes and attainments. After the departure of Basil, Gregory remained a considerable time at Athens, in compliance with the earnest entreaties of his fellow students and associates: and when some longer time had been spent in that city, where the study of the Scriptures was his chief occupation, he returned to Nazianzus, and was ordained a presbyter of that church by his father, whom for some time he assisted in his episcopal charge. While so employed he was persuaded by Basil to come to him in the place which he had chosen for his retreat in Pontus, where they framed, in con-

<sup>30</sup> It is worthy to be remarked how beneficial an industry Christian mothers put forth, in those early days, in training their children to wisdom and virtue. Nonna, the mother of Gregory, Emmelia, the mother of Basil, Monica, the mother of Augustin, and Anthusa, the mother of Chrysostom, were all, among others that might be added, the mothers no less of the minds, than of the bodies of those great men. See the *Treatise of Chrysostom, Ad Viduam Juniorem*, vol. i. s. 2, in which we have the testimony of Libanius to the honour of the mothers and wives of the early Christians.

unction, those rules for the regulation of the monastic life and discipline which tended greatly to bring these institutions into general credit and adoption in Christian states. After passing some time in this solitude, and in these employments with his friend, his duty to his aged parent, who had great need of his aid and support, brought him again to Nazianzus, where he found the Arian heresy, fostered by imperial patronage, rapidly extending its influence. All his exertions were called for to defend the church against an error flowing into it with so full a tide that even his father appeared to be in danger of being carried away by its force. At the same time the Emperor Julian, having succeeded to the government of the Roman world, was commencing his indirect persecution of the Christians. Joined by Basil in this hour of extreme danger, his labours in the defence of truth against these formidable assaults, from without and within the pale of the church, were incessant. The exaltation of Basil to the archiepiscopal throne of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, while it strengthened the hands of these Christian combatants, provoked the envy and malice of their opponents.

The province of Cæsarea comprehended many bishoprics, among which Sasima was one, an unhealthy, noisy, and insignificant town, and this unfortunately was the place of which Basil chose to appoint his dearest friend and companion to be the bishop. The account which Gibbon gives of this transaction is as follows. "The exaltation of Basil, from a private life to the archiepiscopal throne of Cæsarea, discovered to the world, perhaps to himself, the pride of his character; and the first favour which he condescended to bestow on his friend was received, and perhaps was intended, as a cruel insult. Instead of employing the superior talents of Gregory in some useful and conspicuous station, the haughty prelate selected, among the fifty bishoprics of his extensive province, the wretched village of Sasima,<sup>1</sup> without water, without verdure, without society, situate at

<sup>1</sup> Situated at the distance of forty miles from Archilais, and thirty-two from Tyana.

the junction of three highways, and frequented only by the incessant passage of rude and clamorous waggoners."<sup>28</sup>

Gregory, however, submitted, and was ordained bishop of Sasima, but never entered upon the episcopal functions. Again he repaired to Nazianzus, of which he took the government, in aid of his father, who had held the bishopric above five and forty years. His father died soon after his return, and Gregory remained at that place while his mother was living, on whose demise he went first to Seleucia, and then to Constantinople, in compliance with a summons received from the orthodox party, to stem the torrent of the various heresies by which that city was then infested. Here he was lodged in the house of a kinsman. A room was set apart for religious worship to which the name of Anastasia was given, to indicate the resurrection of the orthodox faith, and which became the scene of the extraordinary labours and successes of this holy man for the space of two anxious years. The Arian, Macedonian, and Apollinarian heresies were all shaken by the gigantic efforts and eloquence of Gregory, and the catholics were encouraged to look for a speedy triumph as the consequence of the baptism, and the succeeding edicts of Theodosius the Great, who, while Gregory was pursuing his successful course, entered Constantinople in triumph, and made it his first care to exalt to the archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople the man, whose missionary labours had done so much in support of the orthodox creed. But the great council of Constantinople, which took place immediately after this event, did not appear to settle Gregory securely and satisfactorily in his great office. After the death of Meletus, bishop of Antioch, who had attended the council, and brought with him a great accession

<sup>28</sup> The poem in which Gregory pours forth his sorrow caused by this event, is truly affecting.

. . . . . πονοι κοιναι λογων,  
'Ομοτιμος τι και σνιτιος βιος.  
Ναυς ις εν αρβαιν, . . . . .  
Δυσκιδασαι παντα, ιδρυπται χαμαι.  
Ανραι φερουσι εας παλαιας ελπεδας.

of strength to the sound cause against the Arian heresy, the situation of Gregory became exposed to so much vexation and molestation, and so many of the bishops began a contentious struggle for the post to which Gregory had been elevated, that, in the state of infirmity to which age and long continued effort had reduced him, he deemed it most for his dignity and comfort, to leave a sojourn which afforded no prospect of tranquillity, for a place sufficiently removed from ingratitude and contention. He retired to Arianzus, where he found the retreat he was in quest of, in a sequestered spot, which was his own by inheritance, and where he composed his celebrated oration on the merits of his departed friend and companion, the great Basil, who died about the year 379, and several poems, which seemed in no small degree to solace the last years of his life. He died in this agreeable solitude in very advanced age about the year 389.

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I shall preface the few epistles of Gregory hereinafter introduced with his letter to Nicobulus on the subject of good letter-writing.

“Of those who write epistles, (since you ask for my sentiments on this subject) my opinion is, that some make their letters too lengthy, and others far too short for the occasion. Both these depart from the just mean, as archers miss the mark, whether they shoot beyond it, or come short of it. For the error is the same, though it is committed in opposite ways. The right measure of letter-writing is the requirement of the subject matter. For we neither ought to be long where there is not much to say, nor brief where there is a press of matter. What then? Is it proper to measure wisdom by the Persian line, or by the cubits of children, and to write so incompletely as to write, in fact, nothing; imitating the noon-tide shadows which lie immediately before us at our feet, the limits whereof are scarcely visible, and are rather glanced at than seen, and are, if I may so say, the shadows of shades. Whereas the right proceeding is to avoid excess in either way,



and to adopt a middle course. Concerning the concise method of writing this is my opinion.

"Concerning perspicuity this is plain, that we should avoid as much as possible the style of an essay, and aim rather at a familiar phraseology, and to say all in a few words. That is the best epistle, and the most happily composed, which is calculated to bring its matter home both to the learned and to the unlearned,—to the one, as being accommodated in language to the level of the multitude; and to the other, as being raised in thought above that level; and which is understood as soon as read. For it is equally incongruous that a riddle should be plain, and that an epistle should need interpretation.

"The third requisite in letter-writing is grace of expression. But we must avoid altogether a diction dry and harsh, and expressions that are coarse, inelegant, and dull; as where a letter is devoid of pointed sentences, adages, and apophthegms, yes, and of jests too, and enigmatical allusions, by which this sort of composition is rendered pleasing. But let us avoid excess in the use of these things. By the want of them we are dull and insipid, by the adoption of them we are in danger of being carried too far. We should use them to the same extent as purple is admitted into the texture of woven garments. We may introduce figures, too, but these should be few, and not immodest. But let us cast to the sophists antitheses, gingling words, and balanced sentences with similar terminations.<sup>33</sup> Or if we do occasionally introduce them,

<sup>33</sup> The opinions of this Father upon this subject are just and correct. The various modes of playing with words were in great estimation with the erudite men of Greece called Sophists, even when that term had a more dignifying import, as being descriptive of a class of men whose learning and labours were both dazzling and profound. The words of Gregory in designating these arts of composition are *καρπια* and *ισοκωλα*, which are not very easy to express in English without a circumlocution. Quintilian, in the ninth book of his treatise *De Institutione Oratoria*, says a good deal on this species of rhetorical ornament, of which he quotes many examples. He understands the *καρπια* to be where the passage is *extremis syllabis consonans*, and adverts to the opinion of another critic, who thinks that it is also where the

let it be in a playful way, and not when we are treating of serious matters. I will end my observations on this subject by mentioning what I once heard from a man of wit about the eagle. When the birds were contending for the throne, and some came adorned in one way, some in another, it was his greatest ornament to appear before them unadorned. This also should be especially observed in epistles,—to be without the affectation of ornament, and to come as close as possible to nature. Thus far, in an epistle, I have sent you my sentiments concerning epistles. But a subject such as this, perhaps, is not the province of one who ought to be engaged in higher matters. What else belongs to the subject you may search for yourself with your quickness of apprehension; and those who are wise in these matters will assist your enquiries."

GREGORY TO CELESIUS, THE MAGISTRATE.

SINCE you upbraid me with my silence and rustic negligence, my elegant and polished friend, come now, let me tell you a

passage consists of *membra non dissimilia*. He properly censures the frigid and vain affectation of using the figure, if figure it can be called, when it does not easily and naturally arise, but is studied, and far-fetched. It is best adopted, he says, when it gives spirit and vigour to the sense and meaning, not depending wholly upon the sound. *Melius atque actus quod cum figura jucundum est, tum etiam sensu valet.* The *ισοκωλα* generally represent those passages which consist as well of similar divisions or members, as of similar endings, not always accurately balanced; and sometimes of endings not altogether alike; while sometimes the virtue lay wholly in the endings, when, perhaps, the more appropriate name might be *ὁμοτελευτον*, which might be also exhibited only in single words. Quintilian is very worthy of being consulted on this head, of which he treats very copiously. Cicero describes these artifices in these terms, "*Paria paribus adjuncta, et similiter definita; itemque contrariis relata contraria, quæ sua sponte, etiam si id non agas, cadunt plerumque numerose, Gorgias primus invenit, sed his est usus intemperantius.*" *Orat. n. 175.*

Gregory repudiates the too frequent use, or rather the abuse of these modes of aiming at effect in writing; but it will be perceived by those who read his works with attention to his style, that he very frequently avails himself of them, though chiefly in his letters, in which, doubtless, he thought a freer use might be allowed of these little artifices of diction.

fable, which is not without its wit, in the hope that by this means I may put some check on your loquacity. The swallows once ridiculed the swans for their unwillingness to hold intercourse with men, or to exhibit publicly their vocal powers, choosing rather to wear away their lives among the meadows, and to confine themselves to streams and deserts, where their voices were but rarely heard. And when you *do* sing, said they, it is all kept to yourselves, as if you were ashamed of your music. But we can call cities and chambers our own. Men are our companions, and as we fly about amongst them we tell them all our stories—chatting of this thing and the other pertaining to those ancient Attic tales about Pandion, about Athens, about Tereus, about Thrace, the journey, the affinity, the violence, the cutting out the tongue, the letter, and, above all, the story about Itys, and how, from being men, we became birds. As for the swans, they scarcely deigned them a reply, so disgusted were they with their gossip. But when they *did* vouchsafe an answer, it was this, “We are they who can make it worth a man’s while to go forth into the desert that his ears may be regaled with the sweet sound, when we spread our wings out to the zephyr. If we sing not often, or in public, this is the fact most to our credit, inasmuch as we manage our voices like philosophers, and are careful not to mix our melody with the uproar of the multitude. But, as for you, though you affect to save them the trouble of seeking you by visiting their houses, men turn away from your songs with disgust; and, indeed, most justly so, since you cannot hold your peace even after having lost your tongues; but, in lamenting this deprivation, and the calamity that has befallen you, do you not, in fact, exercise your voices more than the sweetest and the most melodious songsters?” Understand my meaning, says Pindar, and if you find my taciturnity better than your loquacity, cease to taunt us, as you do, for keeping silence. Or else I shall address to you that proverb, which is most true and pithy, ‘The swans will sing when the daws shall hold their peace.’

GREGORY TO NICOBULUS.<sup>34</sup>

As I have always given the great Basil precedence to myself, though he thinks I should not, so in this instance I give him the precedence, not less for the sake of truth than of friendship. Therefore placing his epistles foremost, I subjoin my own. For it is my wish that on all occasions we should be yoked together; and at the same time, by this self-postponement, I am furnishing a pattern to others of moderation and humility.

## TO THE SAME.

To write laconically is not, as you suppose, to make use of few syllables, but in few syllables to express much; thus I call even Homer a very brief writer, and Antimachus<sup>35</sup> prolix. Why so? because I measure length by the matter, and not by the words.

## GREGORY TO BASIL.

My compliance with your request depends partly, indeed, upon myself, but partly, and I think still more, upon your piety. I can furnish, on my part, readiness and alacrity. (For never have I declined your company, but, on the contrary, have always sought for it, and now I more particularly long for it.) But you must help to set me clear from my present embarrassment. For I am now in attendance upon the lady, my mother, who has been for a long time in a declining state

<sup>34</sup> Nicobolus had requested Gregory to furnish him with a selection of his letters.

<sup>35</sup> It may be collected from *Ælius Spertianus*, that Antimachus was a very obscure poet. He was a favourite author with the Emperor Hadrian, who would have substituted him in the schools for Homer. Antimachus Colophonius, poeta Græcus, qui auditoribus suis (cum poema obscurum quoddam recitaret) se descrentibus, solo vero Platone manente, dixit, Plato unus instar mihi omnium est. See *Fabri Thesaurus*. At populos tumido gaudeat Antimacho. *Catull. Lam.* 93. 10.

of health ; and if I could endure to leave her in this precarious state, be well assured I would not rob myself of your society. You have only to promote, by your prayers, her restoration and my journey.

## TO THE SAME.

I CONFESS I have proved unfaithful to my promise to be with you, and to carry on our philosophical pursuits together, having agreed with you so to do, even from the time we were at Athens, when we were united in close friendship, and going together<sup>36</sup> (for I know no more appropriate expression). I have not willingly disappointed you, but it is the case of one law superseding another, viz. the law that obliges a minister to parents superseding that of companionship and friendship. But I shall not altogether break my promise if I will accede to this proposal, for then I shall be with you, you with me. My proposition is this, Agree that all things shall be common between us, and that our friendship shall look to the same objects of reverence ; then this will be the effect, that I shall avoid giving sorrow to my parents, and I you, in a manner, with me.

## TO THE SAME.

I CANNOT bear to be taunted with my Tiberina,<sup>37</sup> and its frosts and wintry storms, and with being obliged to go upon tip-toe, and to tread upon planks, by you that are free from mud, so winged and buoyant, and borne along by the arrow of Abaris ;<sup>38</sup> so that, Cappadocian as you are,

<sup>36</sup> ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ἔτι καὶ τῆς ἐκείσε φιλίας καὶ συμφύας. See a similar expression, which was probably in the mind of Gregory, in Rom. vi. 5, ὁμοφυροὶ γεγενῆσθαι, &c. ἢ λ. "For if we have been *planted together* in likeness," &c.

<sup>37</sup> Tiberina was a region of Cappadocia, in which was Ariantus, the place of Gregory.

<sup>38</sup> A Scythian, presented with an arrow by Apollo, which as soon as sent from the string he was borne along with it, and in that way passed through many countries, giving out oracles.



appadocia. Do I do you injustice, a sallow look, and can hardly have but a stint of the sun's rays? You are sleek and plump, not pent up, but full. You live in luxury, and have for this I do not praise you. Cease my mud (for neither have you built against the wintry weather), or in remembrance of mud, we will laugh at your taverns,<sup>29</sup> and the things which cities bring along with

## O THE SAME.

BE as droll and sarcastic as you please at my expense, whether you do it in play, or to answer a purpose. It is no matter; only smile on; indulge your vein of wit and pleasantry, you are sure of my friendship. All things are agreeable to me which come from *you*, whatever, or of whatever sort they may be. For I suspect that you are throwing ridicule upon my situation here, not for ridicule's sake, but (if I know anything of you) that you may draw me over to you; as we dam up streams to divert them into another channel. This is always your way with me. But I must admire, forsooth, your Pontus and your Pontic darkness, and your settlement there, very worthy of being a place of exile, and your rocky heights hanging over your head, and the wild beasts putting one's faith to the test, and the wilderness below; and then that mouse-hole which bears the venerable names of a study, monastery, and school, and the wild and thickset copses, and the round of rugged mountains with which you are not so properly encircled as hemmed in; and the stinted air and the desiderated sun, whose rays you receive as through a chimney. O ye Pontians, ye Cimmericians, ye sunless people! not simply condemned to a six month's night, as it is reported of some, but

<sup>29</sup> ἀντι πηλων της καπηλης. It is evident that the play upon the words must be lost in the translation.

having no portion of your life exempt from shade,—one long night your whole existence—no better than “the shadow of death,” to use the Scripture phrase. I admire, again, your “strait and narrow way,”<sup>40</sup> leading I know not whether, to the Kingdom, or to Hades, but, for your sake, I hope the former. And that place in the middle—what will you? Shall I sacrifice truth and call it Eden, and the fountain divided into four heads,<sup>41</sup> from which the whole world is watered? Or shall I call it a dreary and dry wilderness without a Moses there to give relief by turning the rock into a spring with his rod? Wherever there is not a rock there is a ravine, and wherever there is not a ravine there is a thicket of brambles, and whatever is above the brambles is a precipice, and the road over this is precipitous and tottering upon its base, making the travellers look sharp about them to keep themselves from tumbling; and a river roars beneath (which, to you, is the quiet Strymon of Amphipolis) not so full of fishes as of stones, not emptying itself into a lake, but drawn down into the deeps.<sup>42</sup> O thou grandiloquous man, and coiner of new words! It is, in truth, a great and horrible stream, which overpowers with its roar the psalmody of those who live above it. Nothing compared to this are the cataracts and falls of the Nile. Such a din does it keep up in your ears all day and night. Rough as it is with stones it is unfordable, and so muddy that you cannot drink it. The only kind feature in its character is this, that it does not sweep away your habitation when it is lashed into fury by torrents and tempests. So now you have what I think of these Fortunate Islands, and of you who are so fortunate as to live there. Let us hear no more of

<sup>40</sup> Which is the language used in Scripture (στεινὴ ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδὸς) to express the narrow road that leads to heaven. (Matth. vii. 14). The allusion is hardly within the bounds of that reverence which might have been expected from this sainted father.

<sup>41</sup> Here the writer obviously alludes to Gen. ii. 10, using the very words of the Septuagint, Ποταμός δὲ ἐκπορεύεται ἐξ Ἐδέμ ποτιζὼν τὸν Παραδείσον· ἐκείθεν ἀφορίζεται ὡς τεσσαράς ἀρχάς.

<sup>42</sup> The Strymon is a river of Macedon, which forms several lakes before it flows into the sea near Amphipolis. Plin. c. x. l. 4.

the praises of these moon-shaped bendings, which rather choke up, than wall up, the approaches to the foot of your mountains; and of that neck of land hanging over your head, which makes your life like that of Tantalus; and those fanning airs, and those land-breezes which revive you when your spirits droop; and those melodious birds which sing indeed, but sing of hunger, and fly about indeed, but through the desert. No one travels there, you say, but for the sake of hunting; add, if you please, to visit your corpses. What I have said may be too long for a letter, but too short for a comedy. Now if you take this jesting in good part, it will be well; but, if otherwise, I shall not quit the subject.

## TO THE SAME.

SINCE you take my raillery so well, hear a little more. Let me take my start from Homer,

‘ But come, let us pass on, and sing the furniture within ;’<sup>45</sup>

the roofless and doorless shelter, the fireless and smokeless hearth, the walls which had been baked by fire, for fear we might be pelted with the falling drops of mud, whilst we, poor fellows, sharing in the fate of Tantalus, were thirsting all the while for water; and then that wretched, meagre, hunger-bitten banquet, to which we have been bidden out of Cappadocia, like poor, miserable, shipwrecked mariners, not as if we were invited to the poverty-struck table of the Lotophagi, but to the feast of an Alcinous. For I well remember, aye, and I ever *shall* remember, that bread and that broth, as they were called; my teeth slipping and sliding, and then rising and emerging, as if they were struggling out of mire. You yourself can rehearse these tragedies in a loftier strain, having all that eloquence to set them off with, which familiarity with suffering inspires; from which, unless that noble lady had

<sup>45</sup> ἄλλ’ ἀγε δὴ μεταβήθι καὶ ἐπὶν κοσμον αἰσού. *Odys.* 9. alluding to the Trojan horse. Our author varies the line so as to suit his use of it.

speedily delivered us, that true supporter of the needy, I mean your mother, appearing as a seasonable haven to the tempest-tossed, we should have been long since numbered with the dead, not so much praised as pitied for our Pontic faith. How can I pass by those ungardenlike and cabbageless gardens, and that Augean dirt, cleared out of the house, with which we filled them, when we drew that loaded cart, I the vintager, and you the man of delicacy, with these necks and hands of ours, which still bear the marks of our employment, (O earth and sun! O man and virtue! for I must, a while, play the tragedian) not that we might yoke the Hellespont, but that we might level some rough piece of ground. If *you* feel no disgust at the recital of these things, neither do *I*. But if *you* are disgusted at the recital, how should not *I* take disgust at the practical part which I have had in it? I shall pass over sundry more particulars, ashamed to speak of those many other occupations which formed our amusement.

## TO THE SAME.

WHAT I wrote to you in reference to your fine Pontic declamation was sportively not seriously written; what I now write is written with feelings very serious. O that I were as in those months past,<sup>44</sup> in which it was my luxury to endure hardness<sup>45</sup> with you (since voluntary pain is better than forced pleasure). O for those psalms and vigils, and those outgoings to God in prayer, and that life as it were immaterial and disembodied! O for that intimate and soul-union of the brethren lifted aloft and made godlike by you! O for that emulation, and that provocation to virtue, to which so much strength was

<sup>44</sup> I have only before me the edition of Gregory's works by Jac. Billius, an abbot of the sixteenth century, in which the words are *τις ἀν' ἡμῶν κατὰ μῆτρα ἡμερῶν τῶν ἐμπροσθεν ἐκινῶν*. The passage is from the Septuagint, in which the words are *τις ἀν' ἡμῶν*, mistakingly above printed *ἡμῶν*. The Hebrew words being *עָנָה*, a form of expression by which is indicated an earnest wish, and so rendered by our translators.

<sup>45</sup> So our translators give the meaning of *κακοπαθῆσον* in 2 Tim. ii. 3

added by your directions and rules ! O for that sweet study of the divine oracles, and that light discovered in them by the guidance of the Holy Spirit ; or, to speak of things smaller and more common, O for those daily tasks and willing labours, bearing wood, and cutting stone, planting trees, and making channels for the streams. O that golden plane tree,<sup>66</sup> far exceeding the plane tree of Xerxes, beneath which not the pampered King, but the mortified monk was seated, which I planted, Apollos watered, that is your own excellent self, but to which God himself gave the increase, for my honour, that a monument might remain with you of my cheerful toil, as the budding rod of Aaron was said to be preserved in the ark ! All this is, indeed, easy enough to wish, but difficult to bring about. But come to me, breathe virtue into me, and work together with me : and that profit which we acquired together assist in preserving by your prayers, lest, by little and little, we fade away like shadows in our declining day. Your communications are to me more refreshing than the air I breathe ; I live only that life which I live with you when present, or with your image in my mind when absent.

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The following letter appears to have been written by Gregory, after receiving one, probably the one exhibited before in this volume, complaining of the disregard shewn by Gregory to his plan of retirement in the woods of Pontus.

TO BASIL.

How could you think that your concerns were little and of small account<sup>67</sup> in my eyes, O thou divine and holy man ! what

<sup>66</sup> According to Herodotus it was Darius to whom the present of a golden plane tree and vine was made by Pythias. See Herod. i. vii. s. 28. It is not of much importance to whom, but see the note by Valcknaer.

<sup>67</sup> The Greek word is *επιφθλις*. By *επιφθλις* is meant the refuse of the grapes, which, after the vintage, is left for the gleaners ; and thus the word *επιφθλις* is used to signify what is of little or no value ; or deserving of contempt.



word is this that has escaped from your mouth.<sup>48</sup> Or how could you find the heart to utter such an accusation? Was it that I should take a little courage to expostulate? How has either your mind suggested such thoughts? or your ink written them? or your paper received them? O those studies, that Athens, those virtuous exercises, and that sweat<sup>49</sup> of application! You almost make me a tragedian by your letters. Whom are you least acquainted with,—me or yourself? O thou who art the eye of the world, its great voice and trumpet, its palace<sup>50</sup> of learning. What, your concerns small in the eyes of Gregory! What is there in this earth admired by any, if Gregory admires not thee? As there is but one spring among the seasons, one sun among the stars, one heaven encircling all things, so there is but one voice supreme above all other things on earth, and that is thine, if I am at all fit to judge of these matters, and the love which enchants me does not also deceive me, which I do not think it does. But if what you charge me with is this—that I do not admire you as you deserve to be admired, you include all men under this charge, for no one did ever, or will ever express their admiration of you in terms equal to your deserts, without being qualified as you are, and possessing your magnificence of language; if a man could possibly be his own eulogist, or propriety did not forbid it. Before you accuse me of lightly regarding you, why not first charge me with having lost my senses? Do you take it ill that I act the part of a philosopher?<sup>51</sup> Give me leave to say that this

<sup>48</sup> Ποιον σε εποςφυγεν ἱρεος πδοντων. Όμ. Ιλ. δ. 350, ε. 83. Οδ. ψ. 70.

<sup>49</sup> Της δ' αρετης ιδρωτα θεοι προπαροιθεν εβηεν. Ησιοδ. εργ. και ημ. I. 287.

<sup>50</sup> Βασιλειον. He seems to play upon the name.

<sup>51</sup> The Greek words are *αλλ' ὅτι φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἀγανακτεῖς*; by *φιλοσοφοῦμεν*, a word often used by the early Christian writers in a very extended sense, Gregory is supposed to mean that he was discharging his duty towards his aged parents, which was his reason for his not complying with the wish of Basil by returning to Pontus. To make the term 'to philosophise' embrace all the moral duties, was quite in the spirit of those principles which entered into the christianity of many, if not the greater part of its most learned professors and teachers in the fourth century. Basil and Gregory, whose characters and writings have attracted the admiration of their posterity, do both of them, in a

is the only thing which towers above even your learning and wisdom.

## TO BASIL.

I COMMEND the proœmium of your letter. What, indeed, of time is not worthy to be commended? And so, then, you have been caught by this worldly promotion, as well as the writer of this. Since we have both of us been forcibly ad-

mitted to a certain degree, fall under the animadversions of Mosheim in his internal history of the Church in that century. After doing justice to the great controversialists of that period, such as Apollinaris, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Alexandria, and others who distinguished themselves in the lists against the Emperor Julian, and the many others who disputed with happy success against the worshippers of the gods, of which number were Lactantius, Athanasius, Julius Firmicus Maternus, Apollinaris the younger, Augustin, and, above all, Eusebius; he makes the following observations on the Christian writers of this century on the subject of morals. "The writings of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustin, and several others, upon moral subjects, are neither worthy of high encomiums, nor of entire contempt, as they contain a strange mixture of excellent reflexions, and insipid details, concerning the duties of the Christian life." The historian of the church does not omit to make honourable mention of the books of Ambrose on the 'duty of the ministers of the church, which, he says, are justly commended for the pious intentions they discover, and the beautiful sentiments they contain, (though there are many things in them worthy of reprehension,) and of the writings of Macarius, the Egyptian monk; but proceeds to observe that almost all the writers of this class are defective in several respects; that they are wholly without order, method, or precision; and that they poured out their pious but incoherent ideas in fortuitous combinations, just as they came uppermost; neglecting to deduce the duties of mankind from their true principles, and even sometimes deriving them from doctrines and precepts either manifestly false, or whose nature and meaning are not determined with any degree of accuracy. Their pretended demonstrations, he says, are nothing more than a collection of airy fancies, cold and insipid allegories, quaint and subtle conceits, more proper to afford amusement to the imagination, than light to the understanding, or conviction to the judgment.

This censure may be thought by many to be overcharged, but it can hardly be denied that the theology of this period was much adulterated, that the Alexandrian schools sent forth a multitude of 'amphibious disciples' of Christ and Plato, and that there really did 'gain ground in this century a double doctrine of morals, compounded of two systems, divine and human, to the great detriment of true religion.'

vanced to the rank of presbyter, a rank which I may truly say we neither of us took any steps to obtain. If any thing can be established by testimony, we surely are witnesses for each other, well worthy of credit, to prove how much we love that humble wisdom which is content with the lowest place. But perhaps it has been best for us that our wishes have not been accomplished. Neither do I know what to say, till I know the mind of the Holy Spirit on this subject. Since the thing is done, we must bear it, as it seems to me at least, especially on account of the present crisis, which brings so many tongues of heretics upon us; and which demand of us that we should not do discredit to the confidence placed in us, or to the lives we have hitherto lived.

GREGORY TO AMPHILOCHIUS, BISHOP OF ICONIUM.<sup>42</sup>

I HAVE not asked you for bread, as I would not ask for water from the inhabitants of Ostracina.<sup>43</sup> But in asking for vegetables from a man of Oziza, which is an article in which you abound, and which with us is a great rarity, I ask nothing extraordinary, or unusual. Do not grudge, therefore, to send us plenty, and the best, at least what you can. Little is much to those who are in need. Since I am expecting a visit from the great Basil; and, as you have seen what a satisfied philosopher can do, take care lest you feel the resentment of one who is hungry and out of humour.

TO THE SAME.

How sparingly come these vegetables from you to us! They must needs be vegetables of gold. And yet your riches consist in gardens, and rivers, and groves, and orchards, and your whole country affords you a great vegetable produce; to others as valuable as gold; and you live in a land of fertile meadows.

<sup>42</sup> To whom the celebrated work on the Holy Spirit was addressed.

<sup>43</sup> A city in Egypt, as it would seem, *Pin. cap.* 12, l. 5.

it as to corn, it is to you a fabled felicity; and bread to you may be called the food of angels, so welcome is it, and beyond expectation; either, therefore, give what I ask for withoutudging, or I shall threaten you with nothing less than a withholding of our corn, and then I shall know whether the grasshoppers are nourished by dew alone.<sup>54</sup>

TO GREGORY NYSSEN, A CONSOLATORY LETTER ON THE  
DEATH OF HIS BROTHER BASIL.

AMONG the sorrows of my life this was in reserve for me—to hear of the death of Basil, and the departure of his holy soul, which has absented itself from us to be present with the Lord, after having during all his life made this the great object of his solicitude. By the serious and very dangerous illness with which I am at present afflicted, besides other hindrances, I am deprived of the opportunity of kissing that sacred dust, and of being present with you, and partaking of those proper consolations which your philosophy will suggest, and by which the friends of both of us will be comforted. For to witness the desolation of the church, shorn of so much glory, and bereaved of such a crown, is too much for the eyes or ears of those who are intelligent enough to be fully sensible of their loss. But you seem to me, surrounded as you are by friends,

<sup>54</sup> See Plin. l. ii. c. 26. He seems to allude here to Esop's fable of the Ant and the Grasshoppers.

The above letter of Gregory is pleasing and playful, and may be contrasted with the letter of Bishop Bonner to Mr. Richard Lechinere, from his place of confinement, after he was deprived; part of which runs thus:—The pears were so well accepted in every place, where I had so many thanks for distribution, that I intend, by God's grace, to send down to you your frail pears, to have an eching either of more pears, or else of puddings, &c. ye do know what he doth mean by that Italian proverb, &c. I do not write to Sir John Burne, nor to my lady, for any thing; their conscience is not over large; and the like is in Mr. Hornvule, and also my old acquaintance John Hadger. But if amongst you I have no puddings, then must I say as Messer, our priest of the hospital, said to his mad horse, in our last journey to Hostia, *Al diavolo, diavolo, ai tutti diavoli*. See Burnet, Ref. vol. ii. part ii. Col. of Rec. p. 37.

and well furnished with arguments of consolation, to derive solace from nothing so much as from your own resources and from your reflexions on the deceased ; and thus you have been a pattern to all others of true philosophy, and, as it were, a sort of spiritual rule or measure of moderation in prosperity, and of fortitude in adversity. It is thus that philosophy manifests itself, by keeping us from being elated or depressed by the opposite extremes of success or calamity. In what has thus far fallen from me, I have been looking to the case as affecting your excellency. But by what time or argument shall I be consoled, who am writing this, except by your society and converse, by far the best legacy which that blessed man has bequeathed to me ; that by seeing his virtues in you, as in a clear and shining mirror, I may imagine myself still to have him in possession.

GREGORY NAZIANZEN TO GREGORY NYSSEN, REPROVING HIM FOR LEAVING HIS SACRED STUDIES AND BOOKS AND APPLYING HIMSELF TO THE PRACTICE OF THE RHETORICAL ART.

THERE is in my nature something that determines me to what is right, for I will be bold to do myself justice in this respect ; and I am as angry with myself for giving way to evil suggestions, as I am with my friends. Since all who live in the fear of God, and walk uprightly in the path of the Gospel are connected together by the ties of love and affinity, why should

<sup>38</sup> Perhaps it will not be thought by the serious Christian that there is much of spirituality in the topics of consolation set forth by Gregory in this epistle. Neither does his funeral oration in honour of Basil exhibit the scope of that belief and hope which is authorized by the written word. " Now, indeed," says Gregory, " he is in heaven, and is there offering up, as I think, sacrifices for us, and praying for the people" (*καὶ νῦν ὁ μὲν ἐστὶν ἐν οὐρανοῖς εὐχὰς τὰς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ὡς οἶμαι, προσφέρων θυσίας, καὶ τοῦ λαοῦ προερχόμενος*). And a little after he speaks in this strain, " from whom I am even now receiving counsel, and am corrected in nightly visions, if at any time I fall from my duty." (*ὃ καὶ νῦν ἐν νοθεύουμαι καὶ σωφρονίζομαι διὰ νυκτερινῶν ὁρίων, ἢ ἐκ τοῦ διουτος ἐξω πείσομαι*). See his Funeral Oration on Basil. *Orat. xx. 372.*



not friends hear from me in plain terms what all are breathing in secret. They all (to speak in your manner) reprehend your inglorious glory, and your insensible declension, by little and little, to what is degrading, and that ambition, which Euripides has called the worst of demons.<sup>56</sup> What has happened to you, who were so wise and discreet, and what has made you so at variance with yourself, that, throwing aside those sweet and sacred volumes, which you were wont to read and expound to the people (I fear you can hear this without blushing), and putting them out of the way in some corner, as the rudders of ships, and the implements of husbandry are laid by in the winter season; you take up with what is so salt and bitter in the place of that which is thrown aside, and choose rather to be called a rhetorician than a Christian? For my part I make a different choice, and I am all thankful to God on this account. But let me hope, my best of friends, you will not long continue in this mind; awake from this intoxicating illusion, though late, and return to yourself; clear your character to the faithful, to God, to the altars, and to the holy mysteries, from which you have withdrawn yourself; and do not say to me, in your fine and rhetorical diction, "What! was I not a Christian when I was by profession a rhetorician! Was I not a Christian when I was receiving my education among other young men? And, perhaps, you call God to witness in behalf of what you affirm. But I say you were by no means a Christian at the times to which you allude: at least not such a Christian as you ought to have been, even if I concede a part of what might be expected from you. But where by your present conduct you give offence to others, who are prone enough of themselves to evil, and give them occasion to think and speak unfavourably of you, grant it false, I would still ask, where is the necessity for administering occasion to persons so disposed? And remember, that no man ought to live for himself, but for his

<sup>56</sup> Jocasta, addressing her son Eteocles, calls avarice the worst of demons, *πλεονεξίαν δαιμονων κακιστην*. Gregory borrows the expression.

neighbour also; nor is it enough to be convinced oneself, without producing in others the same conviction.

It is as if you were to come upon the stage as a public boxer, giving and receiving blows, shamefully distorting and throwing about your body; and could you then claim to be in your senses? No man in his senses could so say. For a Christian to act in this way would surely indicate a very light mind. If you change your course, I shall rejoice, said one of the Pythagorean philosophers, lamenting the falling off of one of his fellow-disciples; but if not, you are as one dead to me.<sup>57</sup> But I will not say so to you, from the love and respect in which I hold you. He, from a friend, became an enemy, but a friend still, as is said in the tragedy. But I shall grieve (to express myself in more moderate terms) if neither you yourself perceive what is your duty, which is that which characterizes the best men, nor follow the advice of those who give you good counsel,<sup>58</sup> which is wisdom in the second degree; all I can say is,—this is my advice: pardon a concern which arises from friendship, and is occasioned by the warm interest I take in the welfare of yourself, and of the whole sacerdotal order; and I will add, of the whole community of Christians. If it behoves me to pray with, and for you, I pray that God will help your infirmity, and recal the dead to life.

<sup>57</sup> At the end of one of the letters of the Pythagorean scholars, in an early part of this volume, the sentiment alluded to occurs. The letter is from Lysis to Hipparchus, which ends thus: *εἰ μὲν οὖν μεταβαλοῖο χαρησσομαι, εἰ δὲ μὴ, τεθνακας μοι.* If you shall become changed in this respect, I shall rejoice; if not, you are dead as to me.

<sup>58</sup> Gregory here alludes to the lines in the 'Works and Days' of Hesiod, i. 293, which is quoted by Aristotle in his book on Ethics, cap. iv. There is great good sense in the lines, as there is generally in the 'Works and Days' of this neglected poet.

Ὅτος μὲν παναρισος, ὃς αὐτῷ πάντα νοήσῃ.  
Φημισαμένος τὰ κ' ἰκέιτα καὶ εἰς τέλος ἦσιν ἀμύνω·  
Ἐσθλος δ' αὖ κἀκείνος, ὃς ἐν εἰποντι πιθῆται·  
Ὅς δὲ κε μὴτ' αὐτὸς νοήσῃ, μὴτ' ἄλλου ἀκουῶν  
Ἐν θυμῷ βαλλῆται, ὃδ' αὐτ' ἀχρηστὸς ἀνῆρ.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

LETTERS WRITTEN FROM THE TIME OF LIBANIUS TO THE  
TIME OF SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS.

IN pursuing the course of ecclesiastical history, we proceed to the completion of the fourth century in the luminous track of John, surnamed Chrysostom, whose golden mouth continued to pour forth its eloquence for about eighteen years after the death of Gregory Nazianzen, his predecessor in the archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople. Among the Fathers he was much distinguished by the number and interest of his letters, and, as such, he claims no little consideration at our hands.

He was born at Antioch, about the year 347 of the Christian era. On his mother's side he was descended from a family of opulence and distinction, and his father, Secundus, held a post of rank in the eastern army of the Roman emperor. His mother, whose name was Anthusa, was left a widow in her twentieth year, and continued in that state till her death; the prime of her existence being wholly engrossed with the tender care and nurture of her son, who was indebted to her for the formation of his first principles. His eloquence had its birth and early cultivation in the school of Libanius, where he soon attracted the admiration of his teacher, and acquired general applause. For some time he remained under the captivating influence of the specious sophistries of Libanius, who did his best to recommend his pagan principles and creed to his scholars; but the effects of such instruction on the mind of John were successfully counteracted by his pious mother. The first years of study were given to ancient literature, with which his mind was much imbued; but this early predilec-

tion was soon succeeded by an application to sacred learning, and such a devout study of the Holy Scriptures as was effectual to lay the foundation of his remarkable piety, and the Christian fortitude which shone forth in his concluding years. For a short time after the completion of his literary studies, he engaged in the pleadings of the forum, with other candidates for political distinction; and he appears to have merited the applause of Libanius by a panegyric written by him after the manner of the sophists, and to have been much commended by him for combining the cultivation of rhetoric with the pleader's art and profession.<sup>1</sup>

He soon, however, forsook the forum, and chose another arena for the exercise of his abilities. Under the patronage of Meletius, bishop of Antioch, he devoted himself to the study of divinity, and whatever might conduce to qualify him for the sacred ministry. For three years he received instruction in divine things from Meletius, whose fearless profession of the faith in the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father had exposed him to much opposition and persecution from the Arians; and being baptized by him, that ceremony was the epoch of his dedication of himself to the sacred profession.

When Meletius was banished by the Emperor Valens, Chrysostom, no longer under the guidance of his early friend and instructor, who had appointed him a public reader of the Scriptures, preparatory to his receiving ordination, was persuaded by the example of some of his friends, probably after the death of his mother, to join a fraternity of monks, in the vicinity of Antioch, with whom he passed some years of ascetic seclusion, in the practice of great self-mortification. In this retirement he studied deeply the Holy Scriptures, lived in

<sup>1</sup> Among the letters of Isidore of Pelusium, who was a disciple of Chrysostom, there is one from Libanius to John, which is considered as addressed to Chrysostom, see Isid. l. ii. ep. 42, in which his approbation is expressed in terms the most flattering. "When I received," says Libanius, "your beautiful and elegant composition, I read it to some persons who are well skilled in the rhetorical art; none of whom, when they heard it, could forbear singing out and loudly vociferating their astonishment and delight."

prayer and meditation, and composed his eloquent defence of the monastic life, full of good doctrine, and generally sound precept, however we may justly refuse our assent to the specific grounds and reasons on which he vindicates and recommends the discipline of his order. It must be admitted, too, that his principal argument with parents to induce them to place their children under the monks for instruction was the tendency that instruction had to qualify them, on their return to active life, for a better discharge of their several duties, and to secure them against the contaminations of the world. He proposed an education for the young far superior to the vain, ostentatious, and superficial instruction afforded in the schools of the sophists of that day.

After some years spent in monastic retirement, during which Chrysostom pursued with such unremitting ardour his sacred exercises and studies, that his health became impaired, he returned to Antioch in the year 380 A. D. bringing with him a zeal in behalf of monachism which, for some time, seemed principally to occupy his mind, till further enquiry and experience led him gradually to more practical views of his duty as a Christian minister.

In his work upon the martyr Babylas, he has introduced many sound observations, mingled with much credulity; and this, as well as other of his performances, has proved him to have shared in the superstition characteristic of his age. It is due however to this venerable man to advert to the many sound and moderate sentiments contained in his two treatises on Contrition, and especially in the second, in which, where he speaks of the qualifications necessary for the labours of the ministry, he mainly urges the importance of severe preparatory study, on the ground of the discontinuance of the power of working miracles, which called for the more energetic and industrious efforts of human instrumentality. The demand upon the church for its general vigilance, and the specific responsibilities of its pastoral engagements, cannot easily be shown to have been enforced with more simplicity and solemnity by any writer of any period, than by this luminary of the fourth



century. His Homilies on St. John and the Acts of the Apostles may be recommended in these times, for the very sound and safe opinions in which they abound. He directs the catechumens to the living fountains, as the true sources of knowledge, and proclaims with holy zeal their independence on human traditions, and the collateral supplements of man's authority, thus placing the church in its proper subordination to the revealed and written testimony; and greatly does it conduce to the lustre of Chrysostom, that, instead of referring the heathen or ignorant enquirer to the authority and tradition of the church, for doctrine and instruction, he sends them to the Bible, with an injunction to search freely, but with docile minds, the sacred record, and to build their christianity upon its broad foundations.

After many years of laborious preaching and public teaching, as a presbyter at Antioch, Chrysostom was brought from the Syrian capital to the imperial city, by the influence and patronage of Eutropius, the minister of the Emperor Arcadius, to fill the archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople, vacated in the year 397 by the death of Nectarius, the successor of Gregory Nazianzen. Here his piety, illustrated by his extraordinary talents, soon made him the object of admiration with some, and of envy with others; of which latter description was the numerous faction of the Arian heresy; and his free censures of the rich and luxurious, and especially the gay and profligate females of that class, brought upon him the resentment and persecution of the most powerful about the court, and among the people. If we credit the statements both of Socrates and Sozomen, Chrysostom was naturally irritable, and having entered into conflict with whatever was offensive to Christian holiness and morality among the wealthier citizens, he was soon involved in a quarrel with the Empress Eudoxia, whose dissolute manners became the object of his severe public reprehension. While engaged in this unequal contest, his austerity, privacy, and abstinence, which implicitly rebuked the rest of the clergy, and the severity of his discipline, which declared itself in the deposition of twenty bishops

on his visitation through his Asiatic provinces, provoked so powerful a combination against him, with the empress at the head, and conducted by Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, that the archbishop found it impossible to withstand its violence. The articles of impeachment, on which the sentence of his deposition was grounded, and which were pronounced by a synod of bishops, convened in the suburb of Chalcedon, surnamed the Oak, and thence called the Synod of the Oak, were remarkable for their absurdity, and sufficiently exposed the malignity of the whole contrivance. After being sent into exile in Bithynia, the archbishop was brought back in triumph by the changing tide of faction in the city; but fell again under the same displeasure by a repetition of his offence, and was conveyed away, first to Bithynia, then to Sebastia, and thirdly to Cucusus, a desolate town among the ridges of Mount Taurus, in which place, and in the neighbouring towns of Arabiasus and Pityus, Chrysostom passed three years in solitude; the fast, and, as it has been truly said, the most illustrious and glorious of a life of sixty years, which terminated in 407.

Neither the ridges of Taurus, nor the length nor impediment of the way, could prevent the correspondence of Chrysostom with his Christian friends. During the three years of his exile, in which he was transported, in a state of much infirmity and weariness of body, from place to place, enquiry and solicitude concerning him, seemed to spread and increase, in proportion to the efforts used to carry him out of sight and hearing. Neither the splendour of the capital, nor its imperial court, were able to divert attention from the little, far-distant spot, where the banished prelate still breathed, and made the import of his surname acknowledged, amidst surrounding desolation, and separated by a mountain-barrier from the general commerce of life. His fortitude did not appear to give way under the pressure of his hard treatment; and if, when his prosperity was at its height, the rigour with which his sacerdotal authority was exercised, was the subject of various interpretations, no one could now withhold from the solitary saint, on whom faction had exhausted its virulence,

the admiration due to a magnanimity sustained by its own resources, and retreating to that fortress of invisible strength, whose security needs not the help, nor fears the assaults of men.

His eloquence has never been denied. To have read him, without praising him, would have hazarded any scholar's reputation. None of the Fathers of the fourth century partook so largely of the *ισχυς Σεια*, which was his own phrase in characterizing the style of St. John. He greatly surpassed his master, the sophist Libanius, and all the rhetoric of those schools, whence he derived the rudimental precepts of his oratory, if he did not rather borrow them from Aristophanes, as has been said, and the best Athenian models. The muse of Greece unlocked her secret recesses at the touch of his rod, and imparted to him her richest treasures; and even the praises of Suidas may not be thought excessive, when he compares his abundance to the cataracts of the Nile.

But as to the weight and worth of what is conveyed in the beautiful language of Chrysostom, judgment has usually been pronounced under a bias for or against his religious opinions. Erasmus has allowed him the praise of vivacity and good sense, and candidly imputed his errors to the uncultivated state of ecclesiastical antiquity. But Luther, with an unsparing hand, while he grants him to have been an eloquent speaker, charges him with "digressing from his chief points, running astray, and swinging about, saying nothing, or very little, of that which pertaineth to the business in hand."<sup>s</sup>

Perhaps there may sometimes be justly imputed to Chrysostom a degree of culpable redundancy even in his matter, which is nevertheless replete with great and immortal truths: his affluence of expression may occasionally have betrayed him into repetitions; and the beauty of simplicity may sometimes have been obscured by artificial graces. His letters, written during his exile at Cucusus, are very elegant and interesting, and are hardly second among the Fathers to those of Gregory

<sup>s</sup> Colloq. Mens. c. 29, who, in another place, talks of his writings as a wild disordered heap, and a sack full of windy words.

Nazianzen. In the following epistle he relates to his faithful friend, the Deaconess Olympias,<sup>1</sup> his journey through Cæsarea to the place of his banishment.

TO THE MOST VENERABLE AND PIOUS LADY OLYMPIAS,  
DEACONESS, JOHN BISHOP SENDS HEALTH.

DOES the dreariness of this place affect you with sorrow on my account? Yet, after all, what can be more agreeable than this sojourn? Behold me in the enjoyment of tranquillity, serenity, a perfect exemption from care, and with health of body: and if this city possesses neither forum nor market, in these I have no interest: for all things come to me here in a copious stream, as from a fountain. I have my respected friends the bishop, and Dioscorus, with me, who seem to have no other concern upon their hands but their study to comfort and refresh me. Moreover, Patricius, that excellent man, will tell you how cheerfully and agreeably, amidst mutual services and kindnesses, we pass our time in this place, such as it is. But if the things which befel me in my passage through Cæsarea cause you uneasiness, you do not in this thing act as becomes you; for there, also, were crowns wrought for me of true lustre. All are pleased to praise and commend me, and are perfectly amazed when they hear of my ejection, and the many grievous injuries which accompanied it. But, I pray you, let not this be made known, even though many idle reports may be propagated concerning me. My Lord Pæranus informed me that the presbyters of Phare-

<sup>1</sup> Olympias had been a faithful adherent to Chrysostom during all his troubles in Constantinople. She was a lady of high birth, ample estate, and great beauty, but still more distinguished by her piety and her purity of conduct. She had been the wife of Nebridius, a man high in office, who had been put to death on a charge of mal-administration. Notwithstanding many solicitations, she had resolutely refused to marry again, by which she greatly offended the Emperor Theodosius, who had much importuned her in behalf of his kinsman, Elfridus. While Nectarius, the immediate predecessor of Chrysostom, was archbishop of Constantinople, she had been made deaconess of the church. Chrysostom wrote seventeen letters to her during his exile. She was afterwards herself banished to Nicomedia, from whence she sent helps to Chrysostom, and there she ended her days.

trius were there also, and affirmed that they communicated with me, and had no part in the feelings of my adversaries, nor had any intercourse or commerce with them; and I had rather the real facts were not made known, that I may avoid giving any disturbance to these persons. But the truth is, that what happened to me was very grievous and bitter. And, indeed, if I had been made to endure no other troubles or hardships than those to which I have alluded, enough has been suffered to gain for me innumerable palms of victory. Such has been my treatment, that my life has been in imminent danger. Beseeching you to abstain from making these matters known, I will proceed briefly to lay them before you; not to give you sorrow, but pleasure, for these things are my gain, and my riches. They lessen the cost of my sins; they were trials which led me gradually forward to those which were brought on me by persons from whom they were least to be expected. When we were entering Cappadocia, having narrowly escaped death in Galata, many persons met us on our road, saying, 'Pharetrius is expecting you, and proceeds in every direction that he may be sure of meeting you; and no labour or pains does he spare to see and embrace you, and give you a proof of his affection for you; at the same time he has put all the monasteries, of men as well as women, in commotion to prepare for your reception.' Not deceived by these assurances, I looked for nothing of all this to be done, but the very contrary, though I took care to say nothing of my real expectations to those who were telling these things to me.

But after I had entered into Cæsarea, being worn down with fatigue and exhaustion, in an advanced state of fever, suffering great pain and extreme weariness, I found a lodging, situated at the very extremity of the city, and set about obtaining medical aid, to allay the furnace within me; for I was then in the crisis of a tertian fever. To this was added the harass and fatigue of the journey, the wear and consumption of the bodily frame, the want of persons near me to take any care of me, and the utter destitution of all things necessary to such a condition. The want of physicians to have recourse to; the



labour, and lassitude, and heat of the weather, and the deprivation of sleep, had brought me to the lowest state, so that I entered the city rather dead than alive. Then all the clergy, the people, the monks, and medical men, flowed in upon me, by whom I was received with the greatest assiduity, all waiting upon me, and proffering their services. Meanwhile the fever was raging within me, and I was in the greatest danger. At length, by degrees, the disorder began to remit its severity, and to be somewhat quieted. But as yet no appearance of Pharetrius. In truth he was expecting my departure. When, therefore, I found my disorder sensibly abated, I began to think of setting forward, that I might reach Cucusus, and enjoy a little repose from the fatigues and vexations of my journey. But while things were in this state, news was suddenly brought to me that the Isaurians, with a countless force, were laying waste the territory about Cæsarea, and had burned a large town, and committed great slaughter. On hearing this, the tribune collected what force he could, and marched out of the city, which he apprehended would be immediately attacked by these barbarians; and so alarmed were the inhabitants by the danger that threatened their native town, that even the old men undertook the defence of the walls.

While things were in this posture, on a sudden, at early dawn, a cohort of monks (for I may be allowed to use this word to express their violence) came to the house where I was lodged, threatening to set it on fire, and to proceed to every extremity, if I did not forthwith leave the city. Neither the dread of the Isaurians, nor the disorder by which I was still oppressed, nor any other consideration, could moderate their fury, but breathing only violence, they insisted upon my compliance, with such vehemence, that the soldiers themselves were overawed; for they devoted them to all sort of plagues, and boasted that they had shamefully handled, before then, many soldiers of the city guard. Hearing these words, the soldiers came and besought me that, even if I must do it at the risk of being set upon by the Isaurian bands, I would deliver them from these brutes. When this was told the pre-

fect of the city, he came to our house to give us his protection. But not even by his entreaties were the monks at all moved, and he himself was losing his courage. Not seeing, therefore, any escape from the difficulty, and being unwilling to send us out to certain destruction, he sent to Pharetrius, imploring him earnestly that, as well on account of the disorder under which I was suffering, as the impending danger from the barbarians, he would allow me a few days delay. But even this availed nothing; on the next day the attack upon me was more furious. Nor did any of the presbyters venture to bring us any assistance: but with shame and confusion (for they confessed that all was done with the full consent and direction of Pharetrius\*) withdrew, and concealed themselves, nor paid attention to our summons when sent for.

But what need of further details. Although so many terrors hung over us, and death was almost certain, and looked us in the face, and fever robbed me of all strength (for from this evil I was not yet relieved), at about the hour of noon, throwing myself into my litter, I left the city, while all the people were lamenting and bewailing my departure, and execrating and devoting to perdition the person who had occasioned it. When I had proceeded some way out of the city, some of the ecclesiastics followed me with a slow pace, in great sorrow, exclaiming, whither are you going to certain destruction? while another of the party attached to us, addressing me, cried, "Go, I beseech you, go, fall into the hands of the Isaurians, only escape from us! for into whosoever hands you fall, it will be safety to be rescued from ours!"

Seleucia, that excellent lady, the wife of my Lord Rufinus (she was one of those who kindly attached themselves to us, and were solicitous to render us service), finding things in this train, besought me to accept a lodging in her villa, distant

\* Pharetrius was at this time bishop of Caesarea: and when we look to the shameful conduct of this man, holding such authority and station, with an army of brutal monks ready to execute his will, in defiance of all decency, humanity, and law, we have a picture of these times that exhibits the Christian church of the fourth century in a very degraded character.

from the city about five miles, and dispatched certain persons to conduct me thither. Nor even there were these plots laid against me, to terminate. For as soon as Pharetrius was made acquainted with what had happened, he assailed with threats the lady herself: all which was kept from me when I was received within her villa; for when she came out to meet me she mentioned nothing of it; but explaining the affair to her steward, ordered him to do every thing serviceable to me, and if the monks should come to abuse or ill treat me, to call together the labourers from her other villas, and to contend hand to hand with the monks; desiring me to take refuge in her house, which had a tower in it, strong enough to resist any attacks they could make upon it; that thus I might be rescued from the hands both of the bishop and the monks. But this I could not be induced to do. While I was in the house I remained ignorant of what was in preparation for my annoyance. My safety, however, could not thus be secured from their furious designs against me; for soon afterwards, in the middle of the night, while I was in ignorance of what was going on, Pharetrius came, and with vehement menaces insisted upon my being ejected from the city's suburbs, so that the lady being unable to bear the importunity of this man any longer, without my knowing it, gave him to understand that the barbarians were near at hand, and shame would not allow her to allude to the violence to which she might be exposed. After this, at dead of night, the Presbyter Evetheus coming in, and rousing me from sleep, clamoured out, "Rise, I beseech you, the barbarians are coming, and are close at hand." Consider only with what feelings I heard all this. But when I besought him to say what was to be done, as it was impossible to seek refuge in the city, where we might have to encounter worse treatment than was to be dreaded even from the Isaurians, he urged the necessity of an immediate flight.

The night was dark, moonless, and very gloomy, which aggravated the distress occasioned by the want of some guide to direct us; nor was any one with us who could bring us help: all had abandoned us. Nevertheless, compelled by the

danger in which we felt ourselves, expecting death every moment ; and almost sinking under my vexations, I rose, and desired torches to be lighted ; but these the presbyter ordered to be extinguished, lest, as he said, the barbarians, attracted by the light, might rush upon us. The torches, therefore, being put out, the mule which carried my litter, the way being very difficult, rough, and stony, fell upon his knees, bringing my litter with myself to the ground, and I had well nigh lost my life by the accident. Rising from the ground I crawled along, Evtheus the presbyter, who had leaped from his horse, holding me by my hands ; and thus conducted, or rather dragged, I crept along ; for such was the difficulty of the way, and so perilous the passage of the mountains, it being in the middle of the night, that I was unable to use my feet. Judge, therefore, I pray you, what was my state of mind in such circumstances ; surrounded by such evils, oppressed with fever, unacquainted with what was in preparation for me, in fear and horror of the barbarians, and expecting nothing less than to fall into their hands. Do you not think that all these calamities, if nothing else had befallen me, would avail to dissolve many of my sins, and bring me much occasion of glory.<sup>5</sup>

But of all these sufferings which I have been exposed to, I take this to have been the cause. On my first entering Cæsarea, all the persons in any offices of the magistracy, lieutenancies, or presidencies, the sophists, the ex-tribunes, and the common people generally, came every day to see, visit, and pay court to me. This it was, I verily believe, which excited the jealousy of Pharetrius. Nor do I think that the envy which drove me from Constantinople ceased from persecuting me at Cæsarea ; at least this is my suspicion ; but I state it only as a conjecture, not as a fact of which I can speak with certainty. And who can recount those other things which were yet to be endured in my journey—the fears and

<sup>5</sup> The Greek words are πολλά ἡμῶν δύνασθαι διαλύνειν τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων, καὶ πολλὴν μοι παρίχειν εὐδοκίμησης ἀφορμὴν. These views are often observable in his letters.

dangers yet to be encountered? Which, indeed, when I bring them to my recollection, and under review in their full extent, I fly, I spring from my place with joy, as if I had found a vast hidden treasure: such is the state of my mind and affections. And I beseech you, that on the same account, you would rejoice and exult, and give praise and glory to God, from whom we have obtained the privilege of suffering so much. And furthermore, my request is, that you keep these things entirely to yourself, revealing them to no one; even though other persons, those connected with the courts of justice especially, fill the whole city with the rumour of them, as being themselves in jeopardy of their lives on the same account. But from you let no one hear of them. I wish you even to restrain others, who may be disposed to publish them.

But if on account of what remains for me of sufferings you are troubled in mind, let me assure you that I am now entirely free from all vexations, and that I enjoy better health than when at Constantinople; and the cold, too, why should you so much dread it for me? since a commodious dwelling has now been built for me, and my Lord Dioscorus has taken every precaution to prevent my feeling the slightest inconvenience from cold? But if a conjecture as to the future may be formed from the beginning of my sojourn here, the climate is quite oriental, and not inferior to that of Antioch, so genial and temperate is the air. But something you have said has given me pain. Perhaps you are displeased with me for having been neglectful, through inadvertence, of my duty to you. But the truth is, I long ago dispatched a letter to you, entreating you to take no steps to obtain my removal from this place. I had considered with myself, that there would be need of a long argument, and much effort and labour, to satisfy me about that expression which you used. Although, perhaps, I should have been satisfied, when the import of the words used were properly understood. The words were these—"My only thought is how I may increase my suffering." But this again I regard as something highly sinful, that you profess volun-



tarily, and designedly, to encourage thoughts that bring sorrow with them. For as you certainly are in duty to yourself bound to try and contrive everything to obliterate sadness from your mind, you do what is agreeable to Satan, by augmenting your grief and trouble. Have you never considered how evil a thing is sorrow? Concerning the Isaurians, you need after this feel no uneasiness; for they have gone back to their own country. We are much safer here than we were at Cæsarea. There are none I so dread as the bishops.

TO THE VERY VENERABLE AND PIOUS DEACONESS OLYMPIAS,  
JOHN, BISHOP, SENDS HEALTH, IN THE LORD. FROM  
CUCUSUS.

I WRITE this, just recalled from the gates of death. And I greatly rejoice, that your servants reached me only just when I was entering the haven. For if they had come to me while I was yet tossed about at sea, amidst the fluctuations of the disorder, with which I was struggling, had I sent you cheerful instead of afflicting intelligence, your affection would have seen through the deception. The fact is, that the winter setting in with unusual severity, brought as it were a still severer winter into my stomach, and has made me pass two months in a state of suffering not less sharp, but rather more grievous, than the agonies of death itself. All that I seemed to live for, was to be sensible of the evils with which I was surrounded. Whether it was morning, or noon, it signified not, all was only night to me. I passed entire days without rising from bed; and although I used a thousand contrivances to obtain warmth, yet I was wholly unable to get rid of the bitter cold that seized upon me. For although I kept a good fire, endured all the evil of smoke, kept close in bed wrapped in a multitude of coverings, and never ventured to the door, I nevertheless endured extreme torture;—excessive nausea, head-ache, loathing of food, and nights perpetually without sleep. Each sleepless night was like a long voyage on the ocean. But that I may not torment you by dwelling any longer on these troubles, know that I am

now happily delivered from them all. For as soon as the Spring made its appearance, all my ailments, of their own accord, took their leave of me. But still there is need of great caution in the regulation of my diet, and I take, of course, great care not to impose too much upon my stomach.

But in the midst of all my own sufferings, I have been greatly affected by the accounts which have reached me of the state to which you yourself have been reduced by a sickness which threatened your life. Although my great affection for you, and anxiety about you, was not suffered to be long in ignorance of your state, as, before the receipt of your letters, very many persons hastened to me with the news of your restoration to health. And now I rejoice greatly, not so much that you are delivered from your malady, but especially that you bear what has happened to you so bravely and nobly, calling all these things only a tale told; and what makes your bestowing of this name upon the disorder of your bodily frame more to be admired, is this—that it is the indication of a courageous soul, and of a fortitude full of fruit: for not only with a bold mind to bear troubles and adversities, but to account them as nothing, and to win as an easy purchase the crown of patience, without labour, or toil, or trouble, or molestation to others, but exulting and leaping for joy; this is an argument and proof of a philosophy absolute and perfect at all points. Therefore I do rejoice and exult, and am carried into the air with delight, lose all perception of present anxieties and vexations, am quite overwhelmed with pleasure and glory, in contemplating the magnitude of your mind; and that not for your sake only, but on account of that great and populous city to which you stand in the place of tower, harbour, and wall; speaking as it were, with a distinct voice by those calamities, and instructing all ranks of men, and calling upon them promptly and zealously to gird themselves for contests like those you have been engaged in, and to endure with patience whatever conflicts like these they may have to contend with.

But what is admirable in your case is this,—not that you throw yourself into the public forum, not that you go out into

the midst of the city, but that while you are quietly seated in your little chamber, and upon your couch, you impart courage to those around you, and sharpen them for the conflict; and while the sea without you is raging, the waves swelling, and the rocks are lying below the waters, and their truculent inhabitants are appearing on all sides, and the deepest darkness is investing all things, you, as if it was a season of meridian and calm tranquillity, sailing before the wind with the expanded sails of your patience, conduct your course with the utmost facility; and so far are you from being overwhelmed by the tempest, that you are hardly touched by the spray. And this is all natural, when virtue is at the helm. The merchants, pilots, and mariners, and persons interested in the freight, when they perceive the gathering of the clouds, and the driving force of the savage winds, and the agitated surface of the sea, rising in foaming billows, keep back the ships within the harbour; but if they happen to be at sea, what efforts do they not make to bring the vessel to some shore, or island, or bank; but you, when innumerable winds are blowing, and the huge waves are dashing against each other on every side, and the sea by the violence of the storm is throwing up its waters from its gulphy depths, and some are going to the bottom, others, deprived of life, are the sport of the billows, and others are borne about naked on planks; you leap at once into the sea of troubles, navigating in the midst of the storm with a prosperous course, treating all these things as nothing. Nor is this wonderful when your character is considered.

Let the commanders of ships possess what science they may, they have not that art which contends with every storm; and therefore it is that they often shun a contest with the waves. But with you there is a skill superior to every tempest,—the valour of a philosophic mind, which is more than equal to all trials, more powerful than all weapons, safer than walls and battlements. Arms, and walls, and towers, are for the assistance of armies, and the protection of the person, but are not always, nor perpetually, effectual for those ends; for all these

defences are often overcome, and leave those, who look to them for help, in a state of destitution. It is true, the arms which you use have broken and destroyed no weapons of the barbarians, no machines or engines of war, nor foiled attacks and assaults of this kind, but they have vanquished the necessities of nature, have abolished their tyranny, and levelled their citadel with the ground. Although you have gained innumerable palms in your perpetual combats with demons, yet you have received no wound; but have stood unhurt in the thickest showers of arrows. The weapons which have been hurled at you have rebounded back upon your assailants. And these things are so, that you may be revenged upon your enemies, by the same evils which they inflict upon you; and that by the same snares which they prepare for you, they may be discomfited who thus declare war against you: having in their wickedness laid the best foundation of your increasing glory. You yourself, who by your own clear knowledge and experience of these things, well know their force, very fitly denominate them a mere idle tale.<sup>6</sup> And why, I pray, may you not call them a tale, since though you have a mortal body, yet you despise death, as men are in haste to leave a foreign, and return to their own country. While labouring under the most painful disease, you nevertheless live more happily than those who are in the best health, and soundest state of body; for you are neither liable to be cast down by contumely, nor elated by glory and honour;—that condition, which has been the cause of innumerable ills to many, even of those who, after acquiring distinction, in the priestly office, in which they have lived to hoary age, have here met their ruin, and become a common spectacle of derision to the ill-disposed.<sup>7</sup>

But to you, who are a woman, and have with a very delicate frame, borne up against so many and so severe assaults, no such catastrophe has happened; you have indeed

<sup>6</sup> Ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὴ εἰδυῖα καλῶς, καὶ τῇ πειρᾷ τὴν αἰσθησὶν ἔχουσα, ὡς οὕτως μόνον ἅπαντα ταῦτα καλεῖς.

<sup>7</sup> Ἐντιυθὲν ὀλίγη, καὶ κοινὴ προκρίνεται τοῖς βουλομένοις κομῶσιν θεάτρων.

been the means of preserving others from it. Others, when advanced but a little way in this path of trial, not even beyond the preludes of their conflicts, just, if I may so say, starting from the barriers, have been disheartened, and retired from the contest. But you, on numberless occasions, doubling the farthest terminus, have won the palm in every race; evincing yourself conqueror in every species and variety of contention. And well have you deserved the palm. For these contests depend not on age or bodily perfection, but on the mind alone; and on ardour and activity in the cause of virtue. In this cause have women obtained a crown, while men have fallen to the ground. In such, have the young and tender acquired renown, while their elders have been covered with shame and ignominy. In every case it is just to give the admiration due to those who are bent on the pursuit of virtue; but principally to those, who when numberless others give it up, still persevere in their efforts to attain it. On this account, therefore, it is right and reasonable to look to you with admiration; since when so many men, so many women, so many of advanced age, who have been in great esteem for their virtues, have turned their backs, and fallen prostrate in the sight of all, not from the violence of the combat, not from the sharp assaults of the enemy, but have fallen, even before the fight, conquered and routed before the conflict begun; you, on the contrary, after so many battles and combats with so many evils, are neither broken nor wearied out, but have increased in courage, strength, and resolution, in proportion as your contests have been multiplied. The memory of what you with so much glory have achieved, is to you the source and spring of zeal and enterprise, and to us of joy, exultation, and delight. Nor shall I cease to repeat and carry about with me this subject of rejoicing. Wherefore, if my absence gives you uneasiness, surely great consolation is at hand, when you think on your great achievements; while I also, from time to time, though there is a great distance between us, draw comfort and refreshment from reflecting on your elevation of soul.



## TO RUFFINUS.

**O**FTEN have I desired to write to you, my very venerable Lord, because I love, vehemently love you. And both of my desire to write to you, and of the love I bear you, you are well assured. One of these facts is dependent on inclination only; the other is not in our own breasts. To love you, is an act of the will, but not so is it with the act of writing to you, which must yield to the difficulties of the way that lies between us, and the season of the year. One I do without pause or interruption, the other when circumstances will permit. But I correct myself—I do this act also perpetually. For although I do not always write with paper and ink, but with my will and mind, I am always writing. This is the nature and character of sincere affection.

## JOHN, TO SEVERUS PRESBYTER. FROM CUCUSUS.

**ALTHOUGH** I dwell in a most desolate place, I have nevertheless often written to you, and I never cease to enquire after your health, of all who come from you to us. But what can be the cause I know not, that loving me as you do, so ardently, and having it in your power to find persons to take charge of your letters, you still maintain so long a silence. But as I am perfectly persuaded of the fervour and sincerity of that affection for me which you have always professed, I am supported by that assurance, long as your silence has been. My earnest wish, indeed, is to have letters often from you, to inform me of your welfare. And instead of hearing of this from the reports of others, to have the account from your own tongue, and your own hand. Wherefore, my most reverend and respected friend, I beseech you to do what you know will be so great a gratification to me. As to myself, whether you hear from me or not, be assured that you never are out of my remembrance, and that I never cease to cherish that attachment to you of which, wherever my lot has been cast, I have always sought to give

you a convincing proof; and whenever I do so, I rise in my self-esteem.

JOHN TO CHALCEDIA. FROM CUCUSUS.

FOR that reverence, honour, and sincere affection which you manifest towards me, may God reward you both in this life, and, that which is to come. I am perfectly sure of the kind zeal and interest which you have cherished for me from our first knowledge of each other: and although I am separated from you now by a long inter-space, and as well by reason of my desolate situation, perpetual perils, the frequent attacks of robbers, and the destitution of medical help, I am in a calamitous condition, none of these things hinder my bearing your sweet attention to me in grateful remembrance; and that affection which I always felt for you and your family, I still preserve in a flourishing state, nor suffer it to wear out or decay through length of time or distance. Thus to endure is the character of true affection. But I pray and beseech you, by your prudence and your piety, to bear nobly whatever happens to you; for I know you have walked amidst all the various kinds of temptation from early youth to the present moment; I know, too, that you are able well to sustain the conflict of patience, in which you are so often tried, and whereby you have constructed for yourself, to be worn on a future day, an illustrious crown. But if that in which you are now placed exceeds all former trials, remember that your crown will be so much the greater; and such being the case, let not the sharpness of the conflict dismay you; but the more the surges swell, the more the storm increases, expect so much greater gain, and brighter and more abundant rewards: nor are "the sufferings of this present time worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." The pleasures and the troubles of the life that now is, are transitory, and will all vanish together, nor is there any thing certain or stable in them: they have only the quality of a shade, and depart almost as soon as they appear.

As travellers in a foreign country, whether they pass through

meads, or over rugged roads and places broken and abrupt, whatever be the scene around them, take no interest in it either pleasurable or painful, for they are only on their way *through* it, and not the citizens of it, but pressing forwards to their own country; so I beseech you, neither attach yourself to the pleasures, nor allow yourself to sink under the troubles of this life; but consider only how with strength and confidence, you may journey onwards to the common country of us all; since this, at last, is our permanent place of rest; here is our fixed, constant, and eternal happiness. All else is but the flower of the field, and vapour of smoke, and if there is anything, of which an idea can be formed, more valueless and vain.

JOHN TO CASTUS, DIOPHANTUS, CYRIACUS, ANTIOCHUS, PRESBYTERS OF ANTIOCH. FROM CUCUSUS.

I HAVE seldom written to you in words, but in thought and sentiment continually and frequently. Do not then consider yourselves as receiving only so many epistles as come to you in ink and on paper, but as many as go forth from the will, and the purpose of my mind. For if you do but reckon them in this way, letters have been dispatched to you like showers of snow—in number. But if there is no one to be the bearer of them, my silence is not to be ascribed to my neglect, but to the difficulties of the circumstances in which I am placed. And this I say, that whether I write or am silent, you may think the same of the sentiments with which I regard you and your concerns. For wheresoever I am, I carry always about with me, the remembrance of you engraved on my mind. I acknowledge with great thankfulness the kindness so creditable to you, with which you have received the good monk, and rendered those more benevolently disposed towards him who were so unreasonably bent upon disputing and contending with him. I did not lightly affirm, nor out of any flattery towards you, that if myriads of waves were to be stirred up around you, your tranquillity would be

undisturbed. For those who so easily prevent the shipwreck of others, will doubtless keep themselves out of the danger of storms. Favour me with frequent reports of your welfare; for you know how anxious I am for intelligence on this subject. Such, indeed, is the efficacy of your letters, when they bring me the news of your health, that by whatever sorrows, troubles, vexations, and daily deaths I am beset, when I receive letters from you I am transported with joy, and gather from them the greatest consolation. It is the property and effect of letters, to refresh and revive, with such intelligence, those who are deprived by distance of personal communication.

JOHN TO EULOGIUS, BISHOP. FROM CUCUSUS.

ALTHOUGH I am come to the extremity of the world, I cannot forget your love towards me, but in all my wanderings I carry the remembrance of it about with me, to such a degree have you become master of my affections. Since I have sat down in this the most desolate spot in our world, I never cease to dwell in mind upon your benignity, suavity, gentleness of manners, generosity of disposition, and, at the same time, your alacrity and zeal more burning than fire itself, and all your other eminent virtues; and to cherish the memory of your valuable discourses, and to proclaim to all that rectitude of principle, and that steadiness of resolution, which you manifest towards those who make war upon the church, and fill the world with so many scandals against it. Though, in truth, this is a fact which does not call for my tongue to make it known; since you, with a voice more distinct than a clarion, utter abroad the facts themselves, through the whole east, and to those who live the farthest off. For this I avow my gratitude, and call you blessed;—I admire you, and exhort you earnestly to persevere in the manifestation of the same zeal. For when things are proceeding against one's judgment, to hold fast one's integrity, and, when many are endeavouring to overthrow the church, to avoid being perverted in one's opinions, is less valiant than to

encounter these things with a determined opposition. This is to apply, not a little and slight palliative, but a remedy the most vigorous and efficacious. And I think it cannot be doubted that, incited by the example of your goodness, the most reverend and pious prelates of Palestine will follow your steps; for of this I am assured by experience, that by your uprightness of conduct, as the body is inseparably joined to the head, so you will hold them fastened and bound to yourself in the sweet bonds of love and charity; which I take to be the greatest display and proof that virtue can give of itself.

## JOHN TO THEODORA. FROM CUCUSUS.

I AM exhausted and worn out, and am dying a thousand deaths: and these matters they who bring you these letters are able of their own knowledge to make you accurately acquainted with, although they were a very short time with me, and I could enjoy but a very brief conversation with them, having been so enfeebled by continual attacks of fever, and, while under the influence of it, forced to pursue my journey night and day. During which time I was oppressed with heat, and wasted with watching; suffering under the privation of all necessities, as well as of all care and attendance. I have endured greater hardships than they who work in the mines, or are shut up in prisons. After tedious delays, at length, by what means I hardly know, I reached Cæsarea, with great difficulty, as one driven into port by a storm. But the port could not repair the mischief to my health occasioned by the storm, so much injury had I received from past sufferings. It is true that when I entered Cæsarea I revived a little; that I got pure water to drink; that I got bread that was neither musty nor dried up; nor did I any longer bathe in broken tubs; I did obtain a bath, such as it was; I was permitted to keep to my bed; and I might add more to these particulars. But that I may not trouble you with any more of my story, I stop here, subjoining only this—do not



cease to complain to those who profess to be interested in my welfare, that with so many loving and powerful friends I am unable to obtain what criminals do obtain—to be removed to a place less rigorous and less remote; and that with a body incapable of endurance, and under a dread of the Isaurians, by whom every thing is attacked, I am denied so small and trifling a grace. But for this glory be rendered to God, and I cease not to glorify him for all things; for ever blessed be his name. With respect to yourself, I must own myself astonished that, after having written to you a fourth and even a fifth letter, I have received only one from you during so long an interval; it cannot be a difficult task for you to write often to me. I do not say this with any intention to reproach you. For love is not the product of necessity, but of the free heart. But I do feel much hurt to think that I have so soon been forgotten by you; that in so long a space of time you should have favoured me with only one letter. If, therefore, I am making a request which it is not troublesome and burthensome to you to grant, let me beg you to do what is within your power, and depends wholly upon your will. I will not trouble you on any other account, that I may not, besides failing to obtain what I ask for, be considered importunate and wearisome.

JOHN TO CARTERIUS, GOVERNOR. FROM CUCUSUS.

A most marvellously desolate place is this Cucusus! and yet it does not so depress me by its solitude, as it refreshes me by its quiet, and the freedom, which I enjoy in it, from all occupation. I am thus brought into this solitude as into a harbour. After the evils of my voyage I draw my breath freely, and recover myself by this same tranquillity from what remained of the sickness and other sufferings I have undergone. And these things I address to you, particularly because I know how kind an interest you take in my repose. For what you did for me in Constantinople, I can never forget,—how you endeavoured to repress those impetuous and senseless

commotions, and how every thing was done by you that could be done on your part, that I might be placed in safety. These things I take care to publish wherever I go, being very gratefully sensible, my very venerated lord, of your anxious care of me. But as it is not only a great gratification to me to be so affectionately regarded by you, but to enjoy your correspondence, by which I am certified of the state of your health, I pray you let me have this privilege, as it will be a great solace to me while I wear out life in this foreign land.

## JOHN TO HIS SISTER, FROM CUCUSUS.

THE law of nature has united us in love, and the same pains gave us birth. But yet not so much on that account as on another, which deserves still greater consideration, do I love and honour you, which is, that you regard the things of this present time as nothing worth; that you dispel them from you as smoke; that you tread upon them as dust and dirt; and spread your light wings for your passage to Heaven; and further, that neither your conjugal cares, nor your anxiety about your children's nurture, nor your household administrations, nor the troubles which they create, are able to interrupt or retard your course, but that all these things which might appear to be so many impediments in your way, are made use of by you as means of increasing the celerity of your flight; and that poverty, which humiliates the high-minded of our sex, (for, as scripture says, poverty humbleth a man) is so far from being able to depress, that it exalts you. Such is the force of virtue, that it is entangled in none of those things which lie in its path, like spiders' webs, but dissipating all obstructions more easily than webs themselves, it turns everything to gain. I do not write this to you without a particular motive; but because I think it probable you were much troubled as well by my departure, as by the commotion to which it gave occasion, I have thought myself called upon to write to you, considering that in the affairs of this world two ways lie before us, the strait one of virtue, and the broad one of vice; though I know that

you neither envy those who prosper in their sins, but rather bewail their folly, as knowing that their prosperity is only their passage to punishment; nor do you deem those unhappy who proceed by the narrow road, but pronounce them blessed, while they travel accompanied with virtue; for their hard allotment in this present state, if joined with virtue, conducts and prepares them for honours and crowns. The rich man was not tormented, because he was without pity and humanity, but because he abounded in wealth, and enjoyed a sumptuous table; and Lazarus was crowned, because with much patience he endured the anguish of his ulcers, his want, his destitution, his abject and despised condition, and his exposure to be licked by the tongues of dogs. Although all those things were known to you without learning them from my letters, yet I thought it needful to bring them to your recollection, that you may not be thrown under the dominion of despondency by any misfortunes. Though I do not like to commit all I have to say to a letter, yet as I know how many troubles beset you, I could not forbear writing to you. While I am living in this foreign land, give me the great pleasure and delight of hearing by your letters, that this my exhortation has prevailed with you, as much as I wish and desire it should; and then, far as I am separated from you, I shall truly rejoice. Indeed, great as have been my sufferings, I shall lose the memory of them all, while I feel them to be thus rewarded; and shall look with assurance for a speedy change for better things, indicated by this happy prelude. While you reason on these things in your own thoughts, suffer not your spirits to be cast down by these trials of your patience, but while you cheerfully apply yourself to the care of all your other children, now that an additional blessing has been granted you, bestow your tenderest care upon the fair Epiphanium, in educating her agreeably to God's will. For you know how great a blessing attends upon the right bringing up of children. It was for this that Abraham, amongst other things, obtained a good report; by this was Job crowned; and the blessed Paul is perpetually exhorting parents, saying, "Educate your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

You have now a vacant period, by which you may disengage yourself from superfluous and importunate care and grief; a vacation which may be productive of great benefit; and which may be the stock on which much virtuous fruit may grow, if you will improve it to the most advantage; for I do not think I need write to you on the subject of the lady, our mother, since I well know that among other virtues, your duty to her is one which you mainly cherish, and that it has been a source of blessing to you. I doubt not that by your assiduities you render unnecessary the attendance of servants. But since it is a matter which I cannot but advert to in writing to you, I will remind you of what the blessed Paul says, "Honour your parents," adding, "which is the first commandment with promise." By such a conduct, you will earn many crowns, and fill me with the greatest pleasure. While I think on this, I shall forget all my sufferings. Comforted and refreshed by your behaviour in this respect, I shall think that I am virtually at home, passing my hours with you, and that all things are in a train correspondent to my wishes.

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With this pleasing epistle of Chrysostom to his only sister, I shall terminate the specimens taken from the writings of this eminent father. The whole of the published collection amounts to 242; all written from the dreary place of his exile, and during the last three years of his existence upon earth. From letters written under such circumstances, and from such an abode, it were unreasonable to expect a great variety of matter. One shade of melancholy rests upon them all; but the melancholy of a mind adorned by learning, and cultivated by study. He bore his banishment, not indeed without occasional complaint, but, in general, with a philosophic firmness, which, if his behaviour be compared with that of Cicero, in similar circumstances, brings him before us in a light of unquestionable superiority. Still in these letters we do not perceive in their just and beautiful proportions, those supports under affliction, which we look for in a sainted father of the Christian church. There are not found in them any

distinct references to the Cross, or to the love and sympathy of that Divine Participator in human sorrows, who has beckoned the weary and heavy-laden to come to his rest. If we do not find in Chrysostom too high an opinion of his own deserts, we cannot but discover in his letters a tendency to claim the rewards of Heaven, on a title simply based on sufferings and persecutions. For the pleasures, riches, and honours of the world, he everywhere declares a magnanimous contempt: but though he treats everything around him as vile, he seems hardly to see enough of his own interior, to recognize his natural corruption and need of pardon. Had he watched with a little more jealousy the movements of his own heart, and entertained a more rectified view of his own short-comings, had he laid his foundation more in spiritual knowledge, and studied more in the school of Christ, there would have been more of the Cross, and less of the crosier in his letters; he would have talked more of gratitude than reward, and would have shewn himself more fully impressed with the solemn truth—that before a perfect God, no works of an imperfect being can merit acceptance, much less entitle to reward.

The letters of Chrysostom bear so favourable a testimony in behalf of his numerous correspondents, that we are almost induced to accept them as evidence of a preponderancy of Christian virtue among the sacred orders of the church, in the time in which he lived, but a more general acquaintance with their style and character leads to a suspicion, that the language of commendation, conceived so frequently in the same identical terms, was rather the current form of compliment and courtesy than the expression of merited eulogy. The real history of the time, as it partly appears in the malicious and revengeful treatment experienced by Chrysostom, at the hands of the various dignitaries of the church, is demonstrative of the contentious, ambitious, and factious spirit by which Christendom was agitated and disgraced in the fourth century.

It was this spirit which drove Chrysostom from Cucusus to Arabissus, and from Arabissus to Pityus, on the shore of the Pontic sea. In his way thither he came to Comana, where



he was not permitted to repose, all-weary as he was, but was forced four miles forward to the Oratory of Basiliscus, who had been bishop of Comana, and had suffered martyrdom under Maximian. Here clothed, at his desire, in a white garment, he received the Holy Eucharist, made his last prayer, and died with his usual doxology, the last utterance of his 'golden mouth.'<sup>9</sup>

One of the most interesting and agreeable letter-writers of this period, was Synesius, who drew his first breath in the city of Cyrene, of which he pathetically laments the ruined state.<sup>9</sup> He himself carries back the series of his ancestors as high as Eurysthenes, the first Doric king of Sparta, and the fifth in lineal descent from Hercules; which series was inscribed in the public registers of Cyrene, a Lacedemonian colony.<sup>10</sup> He was bred as a Platonic philosopher, and was a scholar of the celebrated Hypatia, who was killed in Alexandria, in a tumult of the people; and of whose short and interesting story, as related by the historian of the Decline and Fall, it is impossible not to take a little special notice.

Hypatia,<sup>11</sup> the daughter of Theon, the mathematician, was initiated in her father's studies. Her learned comments have elucidated the geometry of Apollonius and Diophantus, and she publicly taught, both at Athens and Alexandria, the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. In the bloom of beauty, and in the maturity of wisdom, the modest maid refused her lovers, and instructed her disciples. The persons most illustrious for

<sup>9</sup> He is said to have been of low stature, with a countenance of grave, thoughtful, but amiable expression. His head ~~was~~ large, his forehead broad, his cheeks sunken, his eyes deep in their sockets. His whole aspect was that of a mortified man, with his flesh subdued to the spirit, and his appetites under the control of the highest reason.

<sup>10</sup> Πολις Ἑλληνίς, παλαιὸν ὄνομα καὶ σιμνον, καὶ ἐν ὡδὴ μυρία τῶν παλαῖ σοφῶν. νῦν πινῆς καὶ κατηφῆς, καὶ μεγάλαισι. Περιβασίλ. p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Synes. Ep. lvi. p. 197, edit. Petav. It is observed by Gibbon, that such a pure and illustrious pedigree of 1700 years, without adding the royal ancestors of Hercules, cannot be equalled in the history of mankind.

<sup>11</sup> See Socrat. L. vii. c. 15, ἀποδυσαντες τὴν ἰσθμὴν οὐρακοῖς.

their rank or merit, were impatient to visit the female philosopher; and Cyril beheld with a jealous eye the gorgeous train of horses and slaves, who crowded the door of her academy. A rumour was spread among the Christians, that the daughter of Theon was the only obstacle to the reconciliation of the Prefect and the Archbishop, and that obstacle was speedily removed. On a fatal day, in the holy season of Lent, Hypatia was torn from her chariot, stripped naked, dragged to the church, and inhumanly butchered by the hands of Peter the reader, and a troop of savage and merciless fanatics: her flesh was scraped from her bones with sharp oyster-shells, and her quivering limbs were delivered to the flames. The just progress of inquiry and punishment was stopped by seasonable gifts; but the murder of Hypatia has imprinted an indelible stain on the character and religion of Cyril.<sup>12</sup>

After having spent a great part of his life in secular affairs, Synesius was converted, and made bishop of Ptolemais in 410. It will appear by the first letter I shall produce, that he was unwilling to accept the charge, and that he was very candid and ingenuous in the avowal of his reasons, and of all the particulars of his life which in any way affected his qualifications for the sacred office to which he was invited by Theophilus, the Archbishop of Alexandria. He was not fully persuaded of the great truths of the Christian religion, and yet such was the laxity as to essentials in those days, to which many look for models and examples, that notwithstanding the candid admission by Synesius of the state of his theological convictions, he was urged and induced to become

<sup>12</sup> The historian says, "the religion of Cyril." I trust he did not mean the Christian religion. Cyril was the nephew of Theophilus, and is said to have accompanied his uncle to the Synod of the Oak. He long maintained the justness of the sentence pronounced by that Assembly against Chrysostom, though after an obstinate resistance, he yielded the point. He refused to listen to the entreaties of Atticus of Constantinople, and Isidore of Pelusium, but according to Nicephorus, L. xiv. c. 18, he at last yielded to the *personal intercession* of the Virgin. Yet Tillermont says, that in his last years he still muttered that John Chrysostom had been justly condemned. Mem. Eccl. Tom. xiv. 278, 282.

the Bishop of Ptolemais ; a fact that reminds us of the case of St. Ambrose, who is said to have been constrained to accept the Archbishoprick of Milan, though but newly baptized, and "not having had time to study religion before his ordination."<sup>13</sup>

Synesius exercised the important office of Bishop of Ptolemais during the space of twenty years, his life having terminated about the same time with that of St. Augustine ; and the acts of his sacred ministry bore testimony to the integrity of his mind, and the firmness and humanity of his principles and feelings. The prognostics of this sensible and wise, and we may hope, faithful deportment, are, indeed, observable in some of the earlier transactions of his life, and especially in the instructive oration which he pronounced, when at Constantinople, as deputy from Cyrene to the Emperor Arcadius ; whom he exhorted to revive the courage of his subjects by an example in his own person of manly virtue, to banish luxury from his court, to rouse the lazy citizen from his dream of pleasure, and to display the spirit of a Roman at the head of his indigenous troops.

SYNESIUS TO HIS BROTHER.

I SHOULD be an insensible man, were I not to return many thanks to the people of Ptolemais, for deeming me worthy of honours to which, for my own part, I do not think myself competent. It is my duty to consider, not so much the greatness of the office which is tendered to me, as my ability to discharge its duties. For, feeling myself a mere man, to be promoted to honours little less than divine, is a distinction which may be very gratifying in the acceptance to one who is fit for the undertaking, but to one who comes so far short of what the undertaking demands, the bitter disappointment of his hopes is the only probable result. It is no new fear of mine, but one which I have long entertained, that my receiving honour from man may be an infliction upon me for some sin against God. For, upon self-investigation, I find myself alto-

<sup>13</sup> See Dupin, Cent. iv.

gether unsuited to the gravity of the sacerdotal office. Let me make you acquainted then with what is passing in my mind, since to none can I do this so well as to him who was brought up with me, and whom I hold so dear. For I presume to think, that you will partake with me in all my cares, and my attainment of any good, or escape from any evil, is at all times the subject of your anxious thoughts. Hear then how matters stand with me, though, indeed, you must, for the most part, be already acquainted with them. I have taken upon me the light burthen of philosophy, and seem to myself hitherto to have sustained it well; but having been praised by some as not altogether unsuccessful in this study, I am thought equal to greater things by those who are no good judges of the qualifications of my mind. I fear then lest, being elated so far as to accept the honour, I should commit a double error, acting as if I thought myself above the profession of philosophy, whilst I fall below the demands of the new situation proposed to me. For consider that between these two things I regularly divide my time,—amusement, and study. When I am studying, I am in privacy, especially if engaged in religious exercises; but when I recreate myself, I am quite in public; and the truth is, as you know, that when I rise from my books I am wholly given up to recreation. I fear, therefore, I am unfitted, both by nature and by habit, for public cares.

Now a priest ought to be a holy man,—one who should be utterly indisposed to any manner of amusement; one who is garrisoned by ten thousand eyes, that he may live conformably to his profession; which check upon him would avail little or nothing without a fitness in the man himself for what he has undertaken, without a spiritual discernment, and a superiority to all self-indulgence. In things relating to God he should not keep to himself, but impart, the benefit of his knowledge; being a teacher of the law, and one who should pronounce its decisions: he must himself perform what is usually the work of many hands. He must do everybody's duties, and submit to everybody's accusations. Must he not

necessarily then be a man of a most capacious mind, to bear so great an accumulation of cares, without being overwhelmed by them; how otherwise can the sacred spark be kept alive in his soul, when such a variety of employments are distracting him? I well know that some men are equal to all this; and much do I admire their abilities, and esteem them to be men of a truly god-like cast, able, as they are, to interest themselves in human affairs, without cutting themselves off from divine communion. As for myself, I feel that I cannot go to and fro in the city, without having my affections implicated in things that drag me to the earth, and bring on my soul more defilement than I can express. For to one who has long found himself sullied even by his family affairs, a slight accession greatly swells the amount. I feel a deficiency of strength. It is the unsoundness within me that makes me unequal to exterior things. I am far from being able to endure grief for conscience sake. As often as any one asks the question of me, I shrink not from explicitly declaring my opinion, that a bishop should be spotless himself, in an extraordinary and eminent degree, inasmuch as he has even to cleanse others from their spots. This it becomes me to confess in a letter written to a brother; but undoubtedly many persons will read this epistle; and, indeed, it is mainly for this reason that I have written it, in order that the matter may be clear to all men. For I am anxious, whatever the result may be, that I may stand free of blame before God and men, and especially before our father Theophilus. For, by laying all my case before him, and giving him an opportunity, by this full exposure of my circumstances, of judging for me, is not the weight of responsibility removed from me? On me both God and the law, and the holy hand of Theophilus have bestowed a wife. I declare, therefore, and protest before all men, that from this wife of mine I will not either entirely live apart, nor cohabit clandestinely with her, as a fornicator.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The celibacy of the Clergy, though countenanced and regarded as a duty, by some of the Western Councils, as those of Elvira, Arles, and Tours, does not appear to have been generally or scrupulously observed. The 33rd Canon of



For the one would be anything but holy, and the other anything but lawful. My wish and prayer is, that I may have a numerous and virtuous offspring. This one thing ought to be well understood by him who has the right of the appointment. Let him be told this by his associates Paulus and Dionysius, who, as I understand, have been made presbyters by the people. Indeed there is no need to inform him of it, but to remind him of it: I shall have more to say to you, however, concerning him. But if all other impediments were of small consequence, who should settle this point?

Again, it is difficult, if not wholly impossible, to shake opinions which have been established in the mind by demonstrative reasoning. You know that philosophy is in many instances opposed to the commonly received dogmas. I never can think it proper to admit that the soul comes into existence after the body:<sup>15</sup> nor will I say that the world and

the Council of Elvira, held about the year 300, A. D. enjoined it, and it was decreed by the council of Arles in 340, that no man, encumbered with a wife, should be admitted into holy orders, unless he engaged to abstain from cohabitation. In the great Council of Nice, 825, Paphnutius, a man of distinguished piety and virtue, who for his perseverance in the faith, had been deprived of one of his eyes, and was himself unmarried, prevailed to have the proposition, that persons married before ordination, should be forbidden to cohabit with their wives, rejected; contending that marriage was honourable, and that the conjugal connexion was consistent with the chastity of the priestly character. *Persuasitque concilio ne ejusmodi lex ferretur, quæ scortandi occasionem praberet.* The opinion of Paphnutius was applauded by the council, and the matter of celibacy was left to the free choice of the party. Still, however, towards the close of the fourth century, the clerical abstinence from marriage was in pretty general practice in the Churches of the west. Synecius issued a decree in 385, enjoining celibacy upon all priests and deacons. In 441, the Council of Orange decreed that those who did not withdraw from their wives, should be deposed; and in two years afterwards, Pope Leo, called the Great, extended the law of celibacy, which had been confined to deacons and presbyters, to sub-deacons. This law was finally confirmed by Gregory, called the Great, in 591. An attempt made in the Council of Trent, to set the Clergy free from this odious and iniquitous restriction, was not attended with the success which it met with in the Council of Nice; though it was an article in the Interim of Charles V.

<sup>15</sup> It was a theological question whether the soul was ex traduce and propagated from the father to the son, by the natural course of generation, or was

other parts of the creation perish together. I think that the doctrine of the resurrection, which is publicly preached, is something sacred, and not a fit subject of discourse. I am far from falling in with the opinions of the vulgar: and I think that the philosophical mind, though it is its business to discern the truth, must yield occasionally to the necessity of falsifying. For the interior light bears the same relation to truth, as the natural eye to its objects, where its vision is obscured by a film: the spiritual vision requires a film between it and the truth, as the natural vision does between it and light, inasmuch as the eye would be injured by being exposed to too much brightness. As the dark is beneficial to those who have a defect in the eye, so, I think, that deception is useful to the people, and the truth may be hurtful to those who are not strong enough to fix their vision upon objects that are very luminous. If the laws concerning the priesthood would allow these things to me, I could undertake the priesthood. For when at home, I act the part of a philosopher—when abroad, and teaching, I indulge in fiction. Not in any respect to disabuse their minds, but to suffer them to remain as they are, is what I propose to do. But if they say that they also are to be awakened, and that the people are to be as the priest in doctrines, I will not be the first to render myself transparent to all. For the people and philosophy, what have they to do with one another? The truth of divine things ought not to be spoken out,<sup>16</sup> since the people require

created, and came into existence after the body. Synesius, as it appears, held the former opinion. Tertullian was of the same opinion, to which also St. Augustine seemed to incline, with a considerable number of the western churches. Jerome says that the soul was created immediately, at the very instant it was united to the body. *Com. in Eccl. c. 12, et Ep. 61, ad Pamm.* Much time and paper were wasted upon these idle and presumptuous questions by those who are called the Fathers of the Church.

<sup>16</sup> How it came to be a maxim with some of the Fathers, I might almost say of the Fathers in general, to use an economy and reserve in their communication of divine things, one sees pretty clearly in this very important epistle of Synesius. The study of heathen philosophy, to which many of the Fathers and great Christian professors had devoted their early lives, had impressed on

a different mode of teaching. Though again and again I repeat that a wise man should neither argue nor be argued with when there is no necessity for it, yet when called to the priesthood I do not deem it right to profess opinions which I do not entertain. I call God and men to witness the truth of what I say. Truth is the special attribute of God, before whom I am desirous in all things to be blameless. In this one thing I will be quite sincere. Fond as I am of amusement, insomuch that from my youth I have been blamed for an excessive and inordinate attachment to arms and horses, I should grieve indeed (for what should I suffer to see my favourite dogs unexercised in hunting, and my arrows worn-eaten), yet I will suffer martyrdom if God commands it. And as I am one who dislikes the cares of business, I shall feel uncomfortable at this change of habits; but I will bear this service of controversy and trouble, burthensome as it is, if I thereby fulfil my duty to God; I will not dissemble my opinions; my mind and tongue shall not be at variance. Thus thinking, thus speaking, I think I shall do what is pleasing to God. I am unwilling to give occasion to its being said hereafter, that without letting my sentiments be known I caught at the appointment. But let the most devout father Theophilus, with this full knowledge of what my opinions are, dispose of me, informing me first of his determination. For he will either

their minds that habit of secrecy and reserve which was characteristic of ancient lore, and continued to adhere to the schools even of the fourth century. Synesius had passed the early period of his life in secular employments, and being nobly born and bred, had received the fullest cultivation which was to be had in his day under the most renowned teachers of the popular learning; and the qualities and habits by which he was characterised, when Theophilus on a sudden invited him to the episcopal dignity, and which he so ingenuously avows, may be taken as a specimen of the loose and insufficient grounds on which the election to high ecclesiastical stations too often proceeded at this era of the Christian church.

Gibbon's note upon this epistle brings both *himself* and Synesius fully into view. "He loved profane studies and profane sports; he was incapable of supporting a life of celibacy; he disbelieved the resurrection: and he refused to preach *fables* to the people, unless he might be permitted to *philosophize* at home."

leave me in my present situation, ~~philosophizing~~ by myself, or he will leave himself no opportunity afterwards of passing judgment upon me, and of striking me out of the list of teachers. Every consideration is trifling in comparison with this point : for I well know that the truth is most agreeable to God. I protest by your sacred head, and what is more, by God, the inspector of truth, I feel great distress of mind : for how can I but hesitate when required to make a transition from one sort of life to another ? If, then, when these things are made manifest, which I do not think proper to conceal, he to whom God has given the authority should still determine to enrol me amongst the bishops, I will submit to the necessity. I will receive it as a signification of the Divine will. I feel that if the emperor, or an evil spirit in the imperial form, were to lay the command upon me, I would incur the penalty of disobedience ; but to the will of God I must implicitly submit. Unless, however, God admits me to be His minister, and *that* by some pre-intimation of his will, it behoves me to cleave to the truth, that most divine thing, and not by a line of conduct opposed to truth, such as all deception is, to enter, in a sinister way, into His service. Let the scholastics know these things, and report them to him.

## TO HIS BROTHER.

I ASKED the young man who came to me about the Silphium, whether it was the product of your own gardening, or having received it as a gift, you made me a partaker of it. And upon my being informed that you had a garden which you cultivated yourself, and that it bore this fruit as well as all other kinds, I rejoiced on two accounts,—at the excellence of the herb itself, and the testimony it bears in favour of the spot. May you enjoy your all productive garden, and may you not get tired of watering your favourite beds ; which I hope may continue to reward your pains, so that you may have the full use of them yourself, and be able to send to me what the seasons produce.

## TO HIS BROTHER.

I HAVE neither ass, nor mule, nor horse, all having been sent to grass, if any of which had been at hand, I should have come to you, my dearest friend. I was very desirous to come to you on foot, and perhaps I should have been able, but my people were against my setting out, lest I should delay those who were going to meet you. However that might be, they certainly thought themselves so very wise, and to have so much judgment, that they considered themselves more able, than I was myself, to determine what I ought to do. They, forsooth, considered that my proceedings were to be suspended upon their wise decisions, and compelled me to be governed by the prudence of others rather than by my own counsel. They overcame me, however, not by their advice, but by main force, and would not permit me to go forth, seizing me by my cloak. What then remains to me but to give you a letter instead of myself. By which I embrace you, and ask therefore some importations from Ptolemais; I mean the news which you are probably able to send me from head quarters, and especially of some great enormity in the West which is generally talked of; for you know that whether this thing has happened or not, is a matter of great interest to me. If, therefore, you will send me a letter distinctly recounting these matters, I will remain where I am; if otherwise, you will have to complain of my undertaking the journey on foot.

## TO THE SAME.

Do you wonder, then, you who live in sultry Phycus, that you suffer with ague and fever; on the contrary, one ought to wonder if you were in a better state of body than what the heat of the climate tends to produce. But you may, if you please, come to us, with the permission of God, and recruit your health; changing the air which is corrupted by the marshy vapour; and changing that bitter tepid water which is



altogether stagnant, or as one may say, dead. What luxury can there be in lying along on the sea-shore sand, which is the only place you have for repose: for where else can you turn yourself? Here you can sit under the shade of a tree, and if you dislike your situation, you can change from tree to tree, and from grove to grove; and may sweep over the little running rivulet. How sweet is that zephyr that gently stirs the boughs; how various are the notes of the birds, and the colours of the flowers, and the herbage of the meadows, partly produced by cultivation, and partly the bounty of nature. All things here regale you by their odours. Here are the juices of a healthy soil. The groves of the nymphs I will not praise. To do it justice needs a Theocritus. I might say many other things in its favour.

## TO PYLÆMENES.

I HAVE received your letter in which you have blamed fortune for not having dealt with you more kindly. Cease to do this, my dearest friend, for it does not become you to complain, but rather to accept consolation. You are welcome, whilst you are thus circumstanced, to come and live with me, where you will find a brother's house. I am not rich, my good friend, but I have quite a sufficiency for Pylæmenes and myself; and if I have you with me, I shall become, perhaps, the richer, with the help of your experience. Others who have set out with no greater advantages, have risen above a mediocrity of wealth; but I am a bad economist. However, my patrimony hitherto furnishes (so as to admit of the most complete exemption from anxiety) enough, at least, to feed a philosopher, (count that no contemptible provision), and one too who brings with him the gift of forethought.<sup>17</sup> Act, then, as I have recommended you in this case, unless indeed in the meanwhile your

<sup>17</sup> Such, upon consideration, appears to be the author's meaning in the passage. His words are, Ἀλλὰ τίς ποτε ἀντίχῃ, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀναδυσσομένην ἀμύληται, τὰ πατρῷα ἢ ἐξ ἑκείνων, ἵδμεναι φιλοσόφον, μὴ τὰ τεχνεῖα ἢ τοὺς λαβύνας καὶ τρυφάς.

prospects have become brighter. And consider again how Heraclea was restored from its fallen state. I have not written letters to my usual correspondents on account of the present state of the times. But lately I wrote to all, giving a whole packet of letters to Diogenes, who is my cousin. If, then, he has been successful in his search for you, for seek you I know he did, he has certainly delivered you the packet, for there was no direction; if not, ask the pilot to point the young man out to you; and when you have received the letters, distribute them to the persons addressed. The persons to whom I am most desirous to convey my salutations are our father Proclus, Trypho, who was a magistrate in our neighbourhood, and Simplicius, both a good man and a good magistrate, and a friend of mine. Give him the letter as soon as you meet with him, and make your use of the man; for it is well to pass your leisure with a soldier of poetical talent. I have by me some fine ostriches, the produce of my own peaceful hunting expeditions; but I could not send them by sea through warlike armaments. And there was no other production of our coasts which I could put on ship-board. Wine, therefore, alone, is the cargo. Of oil, I protest by your precious head, they have not even a vial-full to carry to you. Receive then so many sextarii of wine, and to receive them, you have only to give an order to Julius. I must repeat, for fear it should slip you, I have written to our father Proclus, and have sent these things. Let him receive the letter from you, and the wine from Julius. For golden Trypho, (for I must be indulged even in these matters, with a little humour and Gorgias-like rhetoric) I have prepared luxurious gifts,<sup>18</sup> a quantity of the gum of Silphium; for this is one of the good things Cyrene furnishes. I could not, however, send it now, but I will forward it in another vessel, when I shall send you and him the ostriches, but the oil separately.

<sup>18</sup> *τετραπύρα*, a play upon the name Trypho.

## SYNESIUS TO HERCULIANUS.

I HEARD, the other day, an eloquent man, holding forth in praise of the advantages of epistolary writings. This master of words, who possesses a surprising volubility, chose this for his subject. He descanted much in its praise on many other accounts, but principally that it brought consolation to disappointed lovers, as it made the absent appear to be in each other's company; and satisfied the desire of the soul by the semblance of conversation. On this account he lauded to the skies the inventor of letters, and maintained that it was too good to have proceeded from any man, but was a gift of God to man. I am now, therefore, turning to use this sacred gift of God. And as I am not able to converse with him with whom it would be a pleasure to converse, being deprived, I say, of that opportunity, I will often avail myself of this power of corresponding with him. As far as it is possible, I am with you, and give a loose to my playful moods. If it is not too severe to say so, you have separated yourself as much in mind as in place; and if you persist in withdrawing yourself from those who love you with the most inviolable and unfeigned affection, you will imitate the swallows, who, whilst they dwell among men as in friendship with them, are talkative enough, but when they go away from them are silent. So much for human intercourse and accusations. But if you are for bringing together persons who have been hitherto at a distance, by force of philosophy, considering that what is essentially good is the real friend of man, and that you can only hear that one essential good from the mind speaking, I will no longer impute your silence to a proud forgetfulness of me; but I congratulate you upon your thus philosophizing, and repudiating all low and little things, bringing that which is the better part of your own nature into commerce with that which is the better part of mine. May you maintain this character, thou best of men, and my truly beloved brother.

## TO DOMETIANUS, SCHOLASTICUS.

ALTHOUGH I have been well assured by your actions, that your admirable disposition delights in the kind offices of humanity, and in holding out the hand of help to those who need it; yet I cannot forbear making a strong appeal to your benevolence in the case I am about to mention, being minded to urge the steed on the plain, as the proverb expresses it. For now you are called upon for a proof of your philanthropy, more than on former occasions, as an object of more than usual distress is now about to claim your assistance. It is a woman, an afflicted woman, suffering, together with her orphan boy. Who it is that has done her this injury, and all the circumstances of the case, your kind and charitable self will learn from her own mouth. Exert yourself, therefore, my admirable friend, in defence of this woman,—because such an act will be honourable in itself,—because it will be creditable to you,—and because it will give me pleasure. I shall be a sharer with you in the good work; for she is a kinswoman of mine, and has been well educated with us by a wise and virtuous mother.

## TO THE SAME.

THE cause of right and justice calls for helpers; and may happiness be the lot of those who bring assistance to that cause, and who are fellow-labourers with those who are earnest in it. I have chosen you for this post of defence, to maintain it by your intelligence and skill. It is my duty to do as much for all as I am able; only furnish me with means. By thus proceeding you will experience my friendship, which you shall have no reason to blame yourself for having acquired, nor will any, perhaps, deem it an acquisition to be despised.

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Before we take our leave of Synesius, it would be unfair to his memory not to speak of his character as greatly distinguished among the best and brightest ornaments of the fourth century. His conversion to Christianity was no sudden change produced by interest or ambition, as his mind before that event had long been conversant with theology and philosophy, in all the forms and colours with which the schools had invested them in that disputationary era. His researches in philosophy were recommended and adorned no less by the polite attainments to which they were associated, than by the modesty and manly grace which accompanied their display in the commerce of life. His epistles bear the impress of qualities far above the tone and bearing of the ecclesiastics of the age in which he lived: and it would be difficult to show among the familiar letters of any period, either ancient or modern, more truth of feeling, more richness of expression, and more of the play of vivacity, than in the part borne by Synesius in his correspondence with his friends. He was an accomplished gentleman of the fourth century, with a mind on a level with his high descent, and at an equal distance from sacerdotal haughtiness and monkish humility. His avocations as a scholar and man of science appear to have impaired his fortune: yet no considerations of ease could deter him from the frank avowal of opinions that seemed to be, and ought to have been, a bar to his preferment. On his elevation, however, to the throne of episcopacy, he was fully alive to the responsibility of the charge, and resolute in the administration of its duties. In the annals of faction and persecution, or the uncharitable strife of controversy, the name of Synesius is nowhere heard: it was only in a contest with crime and cruelty that he wielded the weapons of the sanctuary, and tried the efficacy of its spiritual thunder in a combat with secular authority. Andronicus, a provincial governor, whose power in Cyrene and Ptolemais had been illegally obtained, had availed himself of it to give full scope to the ferocity of his temper. To an abandoned career of rapine and oppression he had added the guilt of sacrilege; and Synesius, after a tro



less effort to put a stop to his outrages by remonstrance and menace, proceeded to pronounce against him the final sentence of excommunication; which placed him in the state of an outcast from all Christian commerce and society. The sentence was supported and enforced by the imperial edicts, and the humbled culprit was reduced to implore forgiveness, and to purchase his pardon by a prostrate humiliation. Thus impelled by the course of events, Synesius, the most eminent among those to whom in these times the unsettled authority of the Church was entrusted, for his humanity and moderation, furnished one of the precedents out of which her usurpations grew, and gradually expanded, till they reached their maturity in papal domination.

That he possessed a heart of caressing sympathy and kindness, appears from many of his letters, but especially from those to his brother, to whom he seems to have been tenderly attached; and to Olympius, one of his philosophical friends. He thus recommends his friend Gerontius to his brother: "I have sent a letter by the excellent Gerontius to you, my dear and precious brother, to give him a first introduction to you. Perhaps you will pay him attention, in the first instance, for my sake, but when you have had experience of him, you will esteem and value him for his own sake."

To Olympius he thus writes, "When I read your letter, in which you tell me of your illness, at the commencement, I was greatly alarmed; but as I read on, I took comfort. The danger at first seemed very threatening, but you soon gave me better prospects. As to the things you wished me to send or convey to you, all shall be sent and conveyed. There is no need for me to write to tell you what can or cannot be done, the gift will speak for itself. May you long live in good health and in the favour of God, my dear friend. It is my earnest wish that we may be enabled to enjoy each other's society; and that you may not be summoned away before we shall be able to come together; but if God determines otherwise, remember your absent friend. You may easily find better men than Synesius, but many who love you better you will not so easily find."

Another letter to his brother may be produced as a specimen of his urbanity and friendliness of disposition: "The lengthiness of an epistle shows that it is put into the hands of a bearer who is unconcerned about the writer; but the excellent Acacius knows my whole mind. He will tell you even more than he knows from me, for he loves you much, and has a tongue that gives to plain facts more than their ordinary interest, so that I send you a letter more for the sake of a customary greeting, than because there is any need of one. Still, however, there is this purpose answered by a letter to you, to give you news of your son, Dioscorius, of his good health, and how he reads, and how applies to his books. We have given to him a little fraternity of associates, having added to Hesychius a pair of brothers, whom may God prosper for their own sakes, for the sake of those who are under the same paternal roof, for the sake of the rest of their family, and for the sake of their native country."

So affecting is the tragedy of Hypatia's death, that we follow with a feeling of sadness the pen of Synesius, when he writes to the accomplished and unhappy lady to procure for him a hydroscope, describing its construction and use. The genius and temperament which in a period of such disorder and faction found solace and refreshment in enquiries so pure and improving, associate the names of Hypatia and Synesius with what we dwell upon with the mellowest interest in the thoughts of the past.

I am not asking of the reader an unqualified approbation of this amiable and distinguished man. He was a great admirer, and almost a disciple of the Pythagorean school, and imported from it those maxims of secrecy and suppression by which it was so particularized. Of the reserve of the Pythagorean mystics in the economy of their arcana, few in any age could with reason complain; but reserve in the communication of saving truths is a gross wrong done to humanity. Such a mode of dispensing Christian knowledge is to intercept the beams of the Sun of righteousness, to render darker still the glass through which we see so darkly, and to inter-

pose a veil of human texture between the sinner and the sinner's hope. There is, however, good reason to conclude that Synesius, after entering into the episcopal office, acquired clearer and correcter views of some of those theological points on which his mind had been sceptical or unsettled, as we find him very anxious and active in removing the doubts of a friend on the same subjects; though still it is probable that, like all the luminaries of the church in the fourth century, especially those who were late converts to Christianity, he failed in that entire reliance on the Saviour's blood, and the exclusive all-sufficiency of his merits, which acknowledges the full completion of the work of mercy in accomplishing our redemption.

Whether the letter importing to be sent from Synesius to Hypatia, and following her to the country beyond the grave,<sup>15</sup> be the genuine production of the reputed writer, may be open to some doubt, but it certainly does not comport with the serious views and just sentiments of the believer taught in the school of Christ. Whatever may be the oblivious state of the inhabitants of that nether world, the letter-writer declares his resolution always to remember his dear tutress, Hypatia; and after dwelling upon the deplorable state of things around him, which threatened him hourly with destruction, declares his determination to migrate from the place where the tombs of his ancestors still made the locality dear to him.

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<sup>15</sup> The sentiments of this letter are little in conformity either with the Christianity or philosophy of the mind of Synesius, and are much in the spirit of those pretty heathen hendecasyllables of which I do not know the author.

*Occidit mea cara Panchanilla:  
Occidit mea lux, meumque sidus;  
Et nunc per vacuas domos silentium  
Comes pallidulis vagatur umbris.  
Sed caram sequar; arboresque ut alta  
Sub tellure suos agunt amores,  
Et radicibus implicantur imis:  
Sic nos consociabimur sepulti,  
Et vivis erimus beatiores.*

The series of letter-writers among the Greek fathers of the church, of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, seem properly to close with Isidore of Pelusium, who has left us more letters than any other writer who may be classed among the ancients. Sixtus Senensis, in his *Sacra Bibliotheca*, has made the number to amount to ten thousand, following what appeared to be the statement of Nicephorus, in the fourteenth book, c. 53, of his *Ecclesiastical History*, but which has, with great probability, been imputed to an error in the use of the Greek numerals, the letter  $\iota$  being inserted instead of  $\gamma$ . The aggregate number which has been brought to light is, according to Bellarmin, three thousand one hundred and thirteen.<sup>19</sup> Though, according to others, only two thousand and twelve are extant. There have been several distinguished men bearing the name of Isidore; but the Greek father, with whom we are concerned, was a presbyter, or the abbot of a monastery at Pelusium, a city of Egypt, near one of the mouths of the Nile, called the *Pelusiacum Ostium*. He was a disciple of John Chrysostom, and attracted great veneration by his sanctity and ascetic abstinence. Suidas calls him a *Pelusiote Presbyter*, remarkable for his eloquence and piety, as well as a philosopher and rhetorician, and the author of three thousand epistles, containing chiefly interpretations of the Holy Scriptures. He so macerated his flesh by study, and treasured his mind with so vast a fund of divine wisdom, that he seemed, says Evagrius, to live an angelic life upon earth. We find his name among the saints in the Roman and Greek calendars. Isidore has quoted from all, or nearly all, of the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, and has thrown upon both considerable light. Dr. Heumann, of Gottingen, who wrote a dissertation on the works of this father, has given it

<sup>19</sup> The three persons to whose researches we owe principally the epistles of Isidore of Pelusium, were Jac. Billius, Conrad. Rittershusius, and Andreas Schottus. The publication before me is in one volume folio, consisting of five books, the three first edited and interpreted by Billius, the fourth by Rittershusius, and the fifth by Schottus.

as his opinion, that most of Isidore's epistles were fictitious, i. e. not written to real persons, but used as channels for conveying his disquisitions and remarks; and in Lardner's judgment Heumann supports his opinion with forcible reasons. These letters are written with great vivacity, and contain more sound observations and precepts than can be found, perhaps, in any other productions of the fourth or fifth century. His matter is always perspicuous, and his meaning never distorted by sophistical or artificial phraseology. He was a disciple of Chrysostom and well responded to the precepts of the master. If the golden-mouthed presbyter deserved the inflated encomiums of the sophists of Antioch, in the presbyter or abbot of Pelusium a glimpse at least was afforded of the fairest day of Athenian eloquence. His diction was at once pure and elegant, and may justly be reckoned among those examples which attested the wonderful durability of the Greek language, and its struggles for life amidst the dying literature of the lower empire.<sup>20</sup>

The letters of Isidore of Pelusium are letters rather in name and form than in character and substance, being principally short treatises or disquisitions on scriptural points, and as they seem, at least for the most part, to be written, as Dr. Heumann supposes, to fictitious persons, they are barely within the scope of this work; but we find among them so many just, amiable, and edifying epistles, whether real or feigned, that to give them no place among our specimens of ancient

<sup>20</sup> The Romans, with all their extent of dominion, and all the zeal they shewed for their language, were very unsuccessful on that head. The Greeks set out before them, and, I might say, survived them, for we have many authors in Greek who wrote with considerable purity and elegance, even after the other language had become in a manner barbarous. There is less dissonance or disagreement between the Greek of the first ages and the last, between the writers of the fourth century before the Christian era, and the fourth or fifth century after it, than there is between two Roman authors of the same century. We are assured by Cicero, that there were lawyers who lived almost up to the middle period between him and the XII Tables, who confessed they did not understand those Tables. See Tayl. Elem. of Civil Law, 510. See also *Cir. de Leg. l. ii. s. xxiii.*



letter-writing would be to deny them what is due to their merit and value. It is thus he himself writes on the subject of epistolary composition.

## TO ORPHELIUS, THE GRAMMARIAN.

THE style of an epistle ought not to be altogether unstudied and unadorned; nor should it be over-polished and exquisite in its diction. The one character is homely and ungraceful; the other is meretricious and affected. It admits a chaste degree of ornament, which is all that is wanted for appearance or effect.

## TO ÆMILIANUS AND PELAGIUS, TWO DEACONS, WHO WERE AT VARIANCE WITH EACH OTHER.

THAT a soothing and seasonable speech has the power sometimes, like a particular medicine, of allaying an angry feeling, boiling in the interior of a man, I dare affirm; but whether in any thing I can say there exists a healing power that will be efficacious in the present instance, of that I am not so well assured. If I shall happily accomplish this object, I shall have done well; if I fail, I shall deplore the event, but I shall hold myself absolved from blame. Since your bitter contention has reached, as they say, to heaven, it has not only inflicted wounds on yourselves, but on others also. I have it at heart, if possible, to put an end to it, and make you friends again. But if this, as some assure me, cannot possibly at present be brought about, yet certainly, by maintaining silence, you may enervate the force of this hostility; or you may desist, at least, from aggravating it by angry words, and such as had better have never been uttered. For if you can be prevailed upon to suppress these unwarrantable speeches against each other, your quarrel by little and little may soften of itself, and gradually become extinguished and disappear, from having nothing to excite it; just as when the progress of a disorder is arrested, so that the sick man is stationary, an amendment generally

begins. In the acutest diseases, if the patient's condition remains in an unaltered state, without inclining to better or worse, it is thought to be a good sign; so in the grievous malady with which you both are afflicted, (for you must not think yourselves in any other state than that of severe disease, while you are thus affected toward each other) the inactivity of the disorder will be the symptom of convalescence. Wherefore, if you can resolve to banish all discord from between you, I shall be well pleased; but if you can only stop its progress and suspend its activity, I shall not despair of better things; and shall think that my advice to you to restrain your mutual invectives has not been thrown away.

TO MARTINIANUS, PRESBYTER.

Do not, my excellent friend, strive after wealth, which is the parent of pride and arrogance, brings upon us a band of destructive pleasures, is the architect and fabricator of every evil, and alienates us from the love of God; but cultivate virtue, which turns us away from all the evils of the world. If it demands of us much sweat and labour, do not avoid it on that account; but embrace it for that very reason; for remember, that in other things, that which is the fruit of sweat and labour,<sup>21</sup> even where it is little in itself, becomes the object of our ardent desire; whereas that which is easily acquired, or comes of its own accord, is despised by us, however great in itself.

TO THEODOBITUS, BISHOP.

I wish Eusebius would learn, as he is set over the church at Pelusium, what a church really is. For it is most absurd, and of the worst consequence, that without this knowledge, he should imagine himself qualified to be a bishop. Now

<sup>21</sup> Της δ' ἀρίτης λίρωτα θεοὶ προπαιροῖεν ἐθέσαν  
 Ἀθανάτου· μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὀρθὸς οἶμος ἐκ' αὐτήν.  
 Καὶ τρήχης το πρῶτον: κ. τ λ. Hesiod. Oper. et Dies, l. 289.

that a church is properly an assembly of holy men, having a sound faith, and the correctest moral discipline, is the view entertained of it by all wise men. From the want of well understanding this, Eusebius is doing what must tend to overturn the true church, and give scandal to many. It is true, he is busy about the building of the temple, but at the same time he is despoiling it of its great ornament, by expelling from it zealous and serious men. No one is ignorant of the pains he takes to decorate the building with variegated marble: but if he well understood that the church is one thing, and the structure of the church another, that the one is composed of holy and harmless spirits, while wood and stone are the materials of the other, I think he would desist from his hostility to the one, while he is bestowing superfluous ornament on the other. For it was not to contemplate walls, but living souls, that the King of Heaven visited us here below. But if he still declares himself ignorant of what I mean, though it be as clear as the light to all who are not in a state of the most gross insensibility, I will try to make myself understood by examples. As the altar is one thing, and the sacrifice another; as the censer is one thing, and the incense another; as the council-chamber is one thing, and the council another, the one signifying the place of assembling, the other the persons meeting for consultation, to whom are committed questions of public danger and safety, the same is the difference between the temple and the church. But if he professes not to understand even this, let him be told for his better information, that in the days of the apostles, when the church abounded in spiritual graces, and shone forth in all the lustre of its discipline, there were no Christian temples at all. But in our times, unnecessary ornaments are bestowed on our temples, while the church is mocked by neglect, to use no stronger terms. Now if the choice lay with me, I would certainly choose rather to live in times in which the temples were not thus expensively adorned, but the church was encircled with divine and heavenly graces, than in times when the fabrics themselves are adorned with all kinds

of marble, and the church left naked and destitute of spiritual graces.

TO ELIAS AND DOROTHEUS, INTRUSTED WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

I DECLARE myself the friend of both of you. You both send for me, but I will come to neither of you, to take up the cause of either against the other; as I see no reason for your present hostile disagreement. I will not come to benefit one at the expense of the other. But if you will both do that which it becomes both to do:—if you will lay aside this implacable enmity, and turn your views towards peace, I will come, not to assist one against the other, but to unite you both again in the bond of peace and amity.

TO PALLADIUS.

MY advice to you is, neither to turn an adverse look, nor raise an adverse voice against the Divine Oracles. But even before you hear what is commanded, pledge yourself to the performance. For know what God is, who utters these Oracles.—One who precludes all contradiction, and exacts implicit obedience. For He who possesses an unerring acquaintance with what is best for us, is the proper object of our entire trust in whatever He pronounces and whatever He ordains.

TO ZENO, PRESBYTER.

THE relationship of blood is by no means to be put on the same footing with moral propinquity. Wherefore, if I address you as the nephew of the venerable bishop Hermogenes, I do you no favour; but if I call you his affectionate and worthy disciple, I pay a due respect to both—to you as a follower of one of the best of men, to him as one who has made an excellent man of one of his noblest followers.

## TO PETER, PRESBYTER.

HEAR my opinion, O thou, (in addressing whom I know of no appellation sufficiently exalted,) which is as follows. I think that the first preachers of the word drew willing hearers to their divine instructions, not only by their faithful discourses, but by their personal example; confirming their teaching by the consistency of their practice, the one being the nerve and sinew of the other. It was thus by the consent between their words and actions, without which they would have exposed themselves to ridicule, as do some of the present day, (I mean not to speak offensively) and by this congruity of their lives with their doctrines, that they subdued the minds of men. Wherefore it was that Christ, well knowing that discourse, without a consonant practice, is weak and emasculate, and that he only who is inspired with a performing zeal, as well as with the powers of speech, brings sufficient life and energy to carry on the great work, furnished these teachers with every endowment of virtue and philosophy, instructing them by his own example as well as precept, and adorning them with heavenly gifts; and thus furnished, he sent them forth to catch and reclaim men. For this he well knew, that the conduct and manners of the preachers worked upon men's minds with an effect scarcely less potent than miracles. Being dispersed, therefore, over the whole world, as a sort of labourers with wings on their shoulders, distributing the word of godliness, and regulating themselves agreeably to the model of their great Master, by exhibiting lives not merely blameless, but admirable, they subdued all things under the sun; whereas nothing could subdue them; neither wisdom and learning, nor power, nor wealth, nor empire, nor dominion, nor barbarian rage, nor demoniacal combination, nor Satan himself, nor hunger, nor headlong violence, nor chains, nor any other things that strike us with terror. All yielded and gave way to them; and counted defeat more splendid than victory, with all its trophies; deeming it far better to be nobly beaten, than to be disgracefully victorious, they were made the citizens of heaven.



## TO ADAMANTIUS.

WHY should you wonder that after the coming of the Saviour in the flesh many heresies should have sprung up, considering that Satan, when he heard it distinctly proclaimed that he was about to be finally condemned, and to suffer his merited punishment, scattered abroad the seeds of these heresies, that he might multiply the sharers and companions of his sufferings: and that even before the blessed advent of our Lord, not a few heresies existed. For some men even denied the very existence of a God; others said that if there was a God, still it was a God without providence; while others admitted both a God and a providence, but confined the providence of God to the things of heaven. Others were for extending the providence of God to the things of earth, but not to *all* earthly things, only to things more excellent; as to kings and princes. There were some who maintained that all things were left to themselves; and some that all things were controlled by a fatal necessity; while others asserted the dominion of a blind fortuity. Some thought it lawful and right to pay adoration to idols; some that marriage with mothers was to be approved; some justified human sacrifices; some the sacrificial slaughter of animals; some thought oxen to be the properest victims, and some camels; some even thought that men might eat one another. Were I to enumerate all these cases, I might be discredited, though I could not be confuted. Now I argue from these cases thus.—If at all periods of time there have existed these dissentient opinions and practices among men, (for at various periods the eagerness of men after new things, and new modes, with their proneness to sedition, have disposed them to convulse the present, and propose new laws for the future, according to each man's ingenuity, or the complexion of his mind) why should you wonder that in a matter so far transcending human reason, as the religion of Christ, contentions and discords should distract the minds of beings so subject to the exerce-

agents of ambition, and to be agitated by furious and maddening impulses.

TO NILUS, ON ORATORY.

THE virtues of oratory are these,—truth, conciseness, perspicuity, and suitableness to the occasion. The contraries to these are its vices,—falsehood, prolixity, obscurity, and unreasonableness. For what will it avail us to be true, if we are not concise, and concise if not clear, and clear if not seasonable. When all these virtues meet in a composition, it is then that it is effective, and impressive, and living. It leads the hearers by the force of truth, exercises their thoughts by its brevity, captivates by its perspicuity, and is consummated by its suitableness to the occasion.

TO OPHELIUS, THE GRAMMARIAN.

It seems to me to be a mark of dulness, though to some of you grammarians it may not appear so, to be over nice in the use of terms. But as you are so very wise in these matters, I think it worth while to satiate you with a little of my own on this subject. Oldest and youngest (πρεσβυτατος και νεωτατος) is not to be said of one of two brothers, but of more than two. 'Older and younger' are proper when we are speaking of two; the accession of a third demands the use of the superlative.

TO ADAMANTIUS.

You must know, your friend, so magniloquous and such a searcher after words, (λεξιθηρας) came to my house, just as I was returning home; and when there, became so enchanted with the study of philosophy, that he was content to stay where he was. Mark the effect of his visit,—he has now closed his mouth upon his tongue, and transferred his attention to his mind, and thinks eloquence a small affair in comparison of philosophy.

## TO HIERO, SCHOLASTICUS.

THOSE who designedly obscure the truth by the artifices of diction are, in my mind, more contemptible than those who do not comprehend it. Those who from a dulness of capacity fail in the pursuit of it, are, perhaps, to be pitied and pardoned. But those who have pursued it with success, but maliciously hide it from discovery, sin beyond the hope of forgiveness.

## TO PETER, PRESBYTER.

PEACE, if it is in conjunction with righteousness, is, indeed, a thing truly divine; but if it is not so allied, it betrays the beauty and perfection of virtue. There is peace among robbers, and peace among wolves; but the peace of robbers is a league against men, and the peace of wolves threatens destruction to the sheep. I would not call that peace which has not the ornament of righteousness. When this is added to it, I call it peace. Thus Christ says, "I came not to bring peace upon earth, but a sword." Not that he repudiates peace, but the peace that is yoked with evil. In another place he says, "My peace I give to you." That, therefore, is truly peace which is sanctified by its alliance with righteousness and holiness.

## TO ASCLEPIUS, BISHOP.

As you are desirous of knowing how I think the precept in Scripture, "Be not righteous over much," is to be understood; I will give you my opinion. I think it is open to a double explanation. It may mean either "Do not exact or execute rigid justice," (*μη γινου ακριβοδικατος*<sup>22</sup>) but let bene-

<sup>22</sup> This is the term used by Aristotle (*Αριστ. Ηθικ. Α. κεφ. 4.*) in distinguishing between common law, in which the rule must be general, technical, and fixed, and equity, which makes an application of the wider principles of universal justice to temper the strict letter of a positive institution. The Seventy do not use the Aristotelian terms.

violence prevail against it: it is just to resent an injury: but it is the part of wisdom to bear it with composure. Or the scriptural passage may be thus interpreted, "Walk in the middle path of virtue;" for excess or deficiency turns us out of the right course, and ends in transgression. And that the very wise precept which immediately follows looks that way is manifest, "Neither make thyself over wise, why shouldest thou destroy thyself,"<sup>22</sup> which one of the seven wise men, so called, appears to have stolen, unless, indeed, it was an accidental coincidence. The sentiment to which I allude is, "the mean is the best" (*μετρὸν ἀριστόν*), which another has thus expressed, "Let nothing be too much" (*μηδὲν ἄγαν*).<sup>24</sup> And not only in virtue, but even in piety, the maxim is of force, for piety is in the middle between impiety and superstition.

## TO ZENO.

THAT while the church was flourishing, and not yet in the diseased state in which it now is, divine graces formed a sacred band or chorus around it, its affairs being under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and every minister moved and directed by its influence, is known and admitted by all. And that after a time it became diseased, and fell into disorder and insubordination, so that not only the graces (for that might not be so grievous an event, if that were all) but the life and virtue of the church abandoned it, is also well known to all. To pass by other matters, I will take one fact for a specimen. The name of peace is everywhere, the thing itself nowhere. The church is like a woman fallen from her first estate of purity and felicity, and retaining only the vestiges of her former self. The church has her caskets and her cases of jewels and ornaments, but of her real wealth she is bereaved, not from the neglect of him who first adorned her, but from the unfaithfulness of those who have mal-administered her affairs. Some have dared to buy, and some to sell the priesthood; others do

<sup>22</sup> Eccles. vii. 16.<sup>24</sup> Ne quid nimis.

what, if I might, I should not dare to publish; others say what it is not lawful even to think. Justly, therefore, has the Lord and Bridegroom of the church threatened these persons with that of which you now seek from me the disclosure. "The Lord of that servant, who has so acted, will come, and will cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." But this threat is to them a fable, and this sentence an idle tale, although the end of the world is approaching, and is in travail with their punishment. But do thou, O thou illustrious pupil of the church, pay no respect to those who are on the eve of shipwreck, nor compare yourself with these senseless persons; but render still more luminous the light of your understanding, refreshing it from the source of living virtue. And expect the Bridegroom to come attended by those who are, as virgins, pure in mind and body, to take vengeance upon those who, by their iniquities, have sullied the dignity of the priesthood, and its virgin sanctity.

TO ESCULAPIUS, THE SOPHIST.

It has quite escaped these Greeks, that by the arguments which they bring against the Christian religion they confute themselves. They say that the sacred Scriptures are barbarously written, and full of foreign terms and idioms, without the connexion and order required in composition, and embarrassing the meaning of what is said by a redundancy of diction. But let these very things teach them the force of truth. For how has it happened that eloquence itself has been persuaded and convinced by this artless and simple dialect? Let the wise say how it is, that this language, so full of barbarisms and solecisms, has mastered dogmatic error, with all its advantages of Athenian eloquence. How is it that Plato, that prince and Choryphæus of Gentile philosophy, could never bring over a single tyrant to his opinions, but this barbarous dialect, so full of solecisms, has spread its conquests over sea and land.



## TO NILUS,

ON THE PASSAGE IN ST. PAUL, EPH. VI. 12, "FOR WE WRESTLE NOT,"  
 LT SEQ.

As the strength and skill of a wrestler (*athleta*) is most conspicuously displayed when, though locked in the powerful grasp of his adversary, he yet subdues him in the struggle on the stadium; so Christ engages in combat with the demons by the strength of his cross alone, that the trophies of his triumph may be the more signal and illustrious. And this is what you wish me to expound. Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it, i. e. by his cross. Thus, in truth, were the demons triumphed over by a wrestler transfixed to the cross by his hands and feet. Thus was the devil baffled and worsted by a single arm of flesh, and that flesh suspended on a cross, to which he is obliged to yield the palm of victory.

## TO THEONUS, EPISCOPUS.

Be persuaded of this, my excellent friend, that we act sinfully in resenting wrongs done to ourselves, and passing lightly over offences against God. I grant that when we ourselves are injured, a forgiving temper is very commendable; but when the Divine Goodness is offended, as it is by intemperance and excess (and various are the ways in which we may thus offend), a feeling of indignation becomes us rather than complacency. The practice of men is the opposite to this course, we cannot forgive those who act as our enemies, while we are mild and philanthropic towards those who arm their tongues against God. Moses was full of wrath against the Israelites when they formed the calf, and this wrath was far better than gentleness would have been in such circumstances. Elias was angry with the idolaters, John Baptist with Herod, and Paul with Elymas, not for themselves, but from loyalty to the

majesty of God, who, indeed, needs no avenger, being sufficient for himself; but is pleased with the zeal of the good against the transgressors of his laws. The virtuous are regardless of injuries intended against themselves, and consider this to be the true philosophy.

TO JACOB, THE READER.

FLY, my dearest friend, from the commerce of the wicked; for intercourse with the bad, by an unperceived advance, introduces defilement into the soul. Many with a high opinion of their own steadiness and excellent principles, and fancying themselves secured thereby from whatever temptations may occur, have by slow and gentle steps been led on till they fall into the gulf. Habit is a powerful agent, and by degrees is changed into nature itself; so that some call it a second nature. Others say that nature is subverted by habit, adopting the notion of the old poet:

*"The drop continuous hollows out the stone."*

What is harder than stone, or what softer than water? but by perpetual attrition nature is thus overcome.

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From the multitude of epistles left us by this interesting and amiable Christian teacher of the fourth century, I have extracted the few specimens above presented to the reader. That they might be the fairer specimens, they have not been selected, but adopted as they occurred. If we regard the soundness of the instructions they contain, and the pleasing manner in which they are presented to us, it may not be extravagant eulogy to say of them, that in this respect we are under no greater obligation to any of the Fathers; and I do not hesitate to recommend the perusal and study of them to the ingenuous youth of our own universities and academies. With Isidore our intercourse in this work with the Greek

Fathers may, perhaps, with propriety terminate, and our attention may now be diverted to the Latin letter-writers of the fourth century, who will be chiefly found among the Christian fathers of the western church. The two prelates of the east, Cyril of Jerusalem and Cyril of Alexandria, were both considerable writers of epistles, but their epistles were properly treatises in the form of letters. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, who lived and died in the fourth century, has left a celebrated letter, addressed to the Emperor Constantius, containing a marvellous description of a supernatural light, observed over Mount Golgotha, at the commencement of his episcopate, and called "the apparition of the cross," for that was the form which it was said to have assumed; which luminous cross is stated to have been visible for several hours to the people of Jerusalem. The expression of a wish, with which the letter concludes, that Constantius might be induced thereby to glorify the consubstantial Trinity, will tend, perhaps, to invalidate the evidence of the miracle in the minds of many not disposed to incredulity, since it shews that Cyril, a zealous trinitarian controversialist, sought thereby to influence the creed of the emperor, who strongly favoured the Arian tenets; and it must be confessed to have been but too common a maxim among the great ecclesiastics of that day, that a pious and orthodox end justified a recourse to means inconsistent with veracity.

The above mentioned letter, which is all that Cyril has left us in the epistolary form, and which is given entire in Cave's *Lives of the Fathers*, is certainly of a character not a little remarkable, but hardly such as would much interest a searcher after truth in the present day. This luminous cross might, after all, have been only a natural phenomenon, not well understood in the time of Cyril of Jerusalem, who certainly did not flourish in a very intelligent era in the history of human knowledge, having terminated a career of much activity, much contention, and some usefulness, in the year 386. If more of his letters had come down to us, we should probably have found them entirely devoted to the subjects of his

Catechetical Discourses, and such controversial topics as would have saved them from any handling in this volume.<sup>26</sup>

Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, whom we have seen in connexion with the tragical fate of Hypatia, a catastrophe not exceeded in the cruelty which attended it by any deed recorded in the annals of crime, but whose memory has not been without its vindicators from a charge so covering it with ignominy, has left among his voluminous works letters to the number of sixty-one, but they are for the most part unfitted to the purpose of this volume, being all controversial, and nearly all relating to the Nestorian heresy, of which there is one containing twelve solemn curses denounced against its founder.

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The Latin letter-writers of the fourth century now present themselves to our notice, among whom the Fathers hold a conspicuous place. The Fathers of an earlier period, though in many respects they by no means yield to those of the fourth century, in the weight and importance of their subjects, or in the correctness and perspicuity with which they discuss them, do not supply us with specimens of epistolary correspondence that serve to mark the progress of that department of literature. And considerable as was the industry with which Cyprian, the admirable bishop of Carthage,<sup>27</sup> transmitted his

<sup>26</sup> The letter in question has been held in different degrees of estimation and credit. Sozomen cites it in proof of the fact, and Glycerus, Theophanes, Leontichius, and some others. While by some, as by Rivetus, in his *Critica Sacra*, the letter itself has been regarded as supposititious. Our English authors, however, have generally considered it as authentic. See Cave, Whitaker, Mill, and Bishop Bull. It is due to Cyril of Jerusalem to advert to the value of his Catecheses, which may be considered as one of the most clear, and probably the most ancient, abridgment of Christian doctrines. They are twenty-three in number—eighteen to catechumens, five to the newly baptized.

<sup>27</sup> It is impossible to speak of Cyprian in language less expressive of homage. But we still come very short of Gregory Nazianzen, who recognizes his powerful interest in heaven with the Virgin Mary, and addresses to him a prayer for help and protection in the guidance of those of whom Gregory has the charge. To lend colour and support to such practices as these, the fourth century of the church had need to borrow all the aid that could be derived from miracles and legendary stories.

Christian instructions through the chaunels of epistles expressed with a vigorous command of the Latin tongue, his performances in this kind have little if anything of the character and style of letter-writing, or of that interchange or reciprocity of sentiment and opinion which we look for in epistolary intercourse. We will pass, therefore, to Ambrose, archbishop of Milan, who was a great and distinguished writer of letters, and some of a familiar and even domestic nature, and who was very eminent among the Fathers of the western church, by the sanctity, dignity, and decisiveness of his character.

Ambrose is supposed to have been born in France, and probably in the city of Arles, which was the metropolis of Gallia Narbonensis, the seat of the imperial viceroys, being styled by Ausonius, on account of its magnitude and populousness, *Roma Gallica*. He was the offspring of a noble parentage, his father, whose name also was Ambrose, being the prefect of the province of Gaul, and consequently a person of high trust and importance. The time of his birth appears to have been about 333. I pass over the silly incidents which have been narrated as attendant on his infancy, illusions or deceptions of credulity or superstition, and place him at once before the reader, in the maturity of his years, possessed of great learning, and from a renowned plender in the forum, advanced by his patron, Anicius Probus, to be governor under him of a great part of Gallia Cisalpina, and invested with the consular dignity. Thus promoted, he took up his residence at Milan, where he continued five years in the administration of his high office, distinguished by his justice and prudence; at the end of which term Auxentius, the archbishop of Milan, died, leaving the see vacant, and disburthened of a very decided supporter of the Arian cause. The emperor being besought by the bishops of the province to appoint a successor to Auxentius, declined that exercise of his authority, and desired the bishops themselves to name the new archbishop, as better qualified to make the selection. A tumult was raised by the strenuous efforts of the Arians to procure the election for one of their own party, which called for the interference of Ambrose, in his official capacity; but as he was addressing a



grave oration to the crowd assembled in the church, exhorting them to peace and unity, a voice like that of a child, exclaiming, *Ambrose is bishop*, was heard from among the multitude, which seemed, to ears not ill-disposed for the miraculous intimation, to come from Heaven; and by general acclamation, Ambrose was declared to be destined to the high office, by an appointment the most authentic and decisive.

We have next the account of the reluctance of Ambrose to accept the appointment, and of his retreat into the country, where he was lodged at the house of one Laurentius, his friend, till a proclamation that any one concealing the fugitive would do it at the peril of his life, he was brought back to Milan, where he was obliged to yield to the flattering force of imperial authority, or rather what seemed to him the command of an invisible and irresistible power.

A few days after his baptism, Ambrose was consecrated and invested with the charge of the see of Milan; which event took place A. D. 374; his ordination being not strictly canonical, but approved by the bishops in general, agreeable to the people, and satisfactory to the Emperor Valentinian. One of the first acts of the new archbishop was to dispose of his entire property, by committing the care of his domestic affairs to his brother Satyrus, and settling his lands on the church after the death of his sister Marcellina; while all his treasures in money and goods were, by an immediate gift, bestowed upon the poor. To complete his theological studies, (for though he had been carefully instructed in the learning of a scholar, he was little acquainted with the doctrines or controversies of the Christian church, when he entered upon its most important functions) he placed himself under the tuition of Simplician, a presbyter at Rome, who, both by his learning and piety, was considered as eminently qualified for the undertaking. His three books *De Virginibus*, which he dedicated to his sister, his *Commentary on St. Luke*, and his three books of *Offices*, written in imitation of Cicero, were the earliest fruits of this new direction of his studies.

From the ordination of Ambrose to the death of the Empe-

for Valentinian I. in 375, a period of little more than a year, and during the eventful reign of his son and successor, Gratian, whose death happened in 383, Ambrose exercised with great ability and zeal the functions of his high office, interrupted only by the incursions of the barbarous invaders who were spreading their devastations over the north of Italy, and compelled him, for a short period, to fly into Illyricum, to escape their fury.

Soon after the death of Gratian (August 25, 383), when the supreme authority devolved upon the young Valentinian, under the guardianship of his mother, the Empress Justina, the archbishop of Milan was sent, in a spiritual and political character, to negotiate with Maximus, then at Treves, at the head of his insurrectionary and triumphant army, and to secure, if possible, the peace of Italy. These important missions were executed by Ambrose with great fidelity, spirit, and courage. But a more trying exercise of his fortitude and prudence awaited him in his own province of Milan; where he refused to concede the use of a single church to the Arian worshippers, at the command of the empress, who had zealously adopted that heresy, and was resolved to protect it throughout the dominions of her son. To surrender this point was considered by Ambrose as entirely inconsistent with his duty. He refused, and the empress insisted; and the city was thrown into convulsion by the partisans of the court and the church; the archbishop being frequently called upon to use his authority and eloquence to appease the multitude, who had rallied round him with a determination to support his cause, which was considered as that of truth and orthodoxy.

While this violent contest between the empress and her son, with the weight of the magistracy and the military on one side, and the archbishop, with the whole strength of an incited and enthusiastic people on the other, was threatening the peace and safety of the empire, the victory was decided by the following incident. Ambrose was solicited to consecrate and dedicate a church, which had been lately built at Milan, to which he consented, provided some remains of martyrs could

be found, which might be buried under the altar; a ceremony then considered as important in the dedication of a church. In a vision or dream, a place was indicated to the archbishop, where the remains of two martyrs lay buried, near the tombs of two other saints, St. Felix and St. Nabor. Search was accordingly made, and, in the place thus pointed out, two full skeletons were found, with their heads separated from the bodies. These were the relics of St. Protasius and St. Gervasius, of whom the former had been beheaded, and the latter whipped to death with *plumbatæ*, or scourges with leaden bullets at the end of them. There was also a copious effusion of blood in the coffins.

Great was the press of the people to see these relics. And the curiosity of the crowd was abundantly rewarded by the miracles which followed this wonderful discovery. A blind man, whose name was Severus, so particular is the account given by Paulinus, in his Life of Ambrose, had but to touch with his handkerchief the bones of the saints, and wipe his eyes with it, to have them restored to perfect vision. Many who were possessed and tormented with evil spirits were instantly delivered from them, by contact with the skeletons; while others, by touching the clothes in which they were wrapped, were cured of their diseases.

These extraordinary cures were denied and ridiculed by the Arians, but confidently affirmed by Ambrose himself, by Paulinus his secretary, and Augustine his proselyte and pupil. And it certainly appears that these representations, which many sincere and devout Christians would be disposed to call theatrical, were contrived and exhibited by the special authority, if not the ingenuity, of the great archbishop. This event, whatever was its true character, was the prelude of victory for Ambrose, whose cause was thus supernaturally vindicated. Secular and imperial authority bowed to the dictates of a paramount authority, and monarchs might envy the security with which the saint was seated on his spiritual throne.

By the conquest of Maximus by Theodosius, the subsequent assassination of Valentinian the Second, and the complete

victory obtained over Eugenius, the remaining pretender to the throne, Theodosius became the undisputed sovereign of the Roman world. In this plenitude of power the emperor resided some time at Milan, where, in the succeeding year, he fell sick, and after frequent communion with St. Ambrose till the hour of his departure, committing to him the concerns of the church, and settling the imperial dignity upon his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, he died on the 17th of January in the year 395 of the Christian era. His funeral was solemnized at Milan, and Ambrose pronounced a laboured panegyric oration on the actions of his remarkable life.

Shortly after the death of Theodosius, the fame of Ambrose extended so far upon the earth, that Frigid, Queen of the Marcomanni, sent a letter to him to request him to instruct her in the Christian faith, to which letter he returned an epistle in a catechetical form, advising her to maintain peace with the Roman empire; upon which she appears to have come to Milan, to have a personal conference with the archbishop, but before her purpose could be answered, his last hour was approaching. Paulinus, his amanuensis, records that as the archbishop was dictating to him an exposition of the twenty-third Psalm, a little before his departure, he suddenly looked up, and was greatly surprised at seeing a globe of fire, like a shield, surrounding Ambrose's head, which, by degrees, entered into his mouth; upon which his countenance was as white as snow, but in a little time returned to its former complexion. He adds, that this was the last time the archbishop dictated any thing to him, which was the reason why that exposition was left imperfect.

On the day in which he died, he lay several hours with his arms stretched out in the form of a cross, and with his lips continually moving, though none could collect his words. Honoratus, bishop of Vercellæ, being on his bed in an upper chamber, suddenly heard a voice, which said three times, "Make haste, for he is about to depart," who, thereupon came down, and gave him the holy eucharist, and then he immediately expired, on the 4th of April, in the year 397.

Thus was withdrawn from among men this great doctor of the Latin church; a person, without doubt, possessed of many eminent qualities, but so largely partaking of the childish credulity and superstition of the time, and so frequently the subject of fabricated tales and impostures, that the true lines of his character are hardly to be accurately traced through the misty medium in which he is enveloped. The efforts which have been made to enlarge the dimensions of the figure, have obscured its real proportions, and present him to us a great personage, indeed, but with some imposition upon our senses, and with some extravagance of effect. Among the latest miracles ascribed to him we read, that after the death of the Emperor Theodosius, a servant of the Count Stilicho, for some ill acts done by him, was by Ambrose delivered over to Satan, upon which an evil spirit immediately seized upon him, and tormented him, to the great amazement and terror of the beholders. After this we find him departing out of life with a pompous retinue of fictitious wonders. Still he stands before us a man of great worth and moral superiority, and with qualities bordering on Christian heroism, invincibly firm in the maintenance of a courageous consistency, and on a level with the greatest occasions which the agitated condition of the time could produce.

Among the instances here alluded to, no one is so prominent as his behaviour towards the Emperor Theodosius, on the promiscuous massacre of a large portion of the inhabitants of Thessalonica. The people of that city had murdered, in a furious assault upon the garrison, the general, Botheric, and some of the principal officers, in revenge for the imprisonment of a favourite charioteer, who was wont to amuse them on the race course, and whose liberation was refused to be granted to their urgent demand. The refusal was justified by the crime of the prisoner; and the outrage committed by the people was attended by acts of the most savage barbarity. The mangled bodies of the victims were dragged along the streets, and the mind of the emperor was filled with horror and indignation by the recital of the atrocity.



Mr. Gibbon has well observed, that "the sentence of a dispassionate judge would have inflicted a severe punishment on the authors of the crime; and the merit of Botheric might contribute to exasperate the grief and indignation of his master. But the fiery and choleric temper of Theodosius was impatient of the dilatory forms of judicial enquiry, and he hastily resolved that the blood of his lieutenant should be expiated by the blood of the guilty people."

The messengers of death were dispatched, and it is said the emperor repented of his decree when it was too late to recal them. The massacre of many thousands of the people in the area of the circus, to which they were invited to witness the games, by the soldiers of the emperor, and by his especial order, was doubtless a stain upon the character of a Christian prince, of the deepest die; and his guilt before God was such as only to be counterbalanced by the transcendental merits of Him who has expiated every sin to which those merits are applied, through faith and repentance; but the stipulated penance enjoined by Ambrose, and the rigorous conditions of pardon and peace, propounded, limited, and mitigated by the authority and concession of a human dispenser of punishment and mercy to the soul of the culprit, present to the view of the humble believer, whose hope and trust lie wholly within the compass of the revealed word, no legitimate or satisfactory exposition of the methods of Divine mercy. After a few months of humiliation, (the canonical period of penance having been reduced in favour of this special suppliant) in which the imperial homicide, stripped of his purple, and all ensigns of royalty, in the midst of the church of Milan, in a suppliant posture, implored with sighs and tears the pardon of his sins, Theodosius was restored to the communion of the faithful.

The victory of Ambrose was thus complete; and if he had the conscience and conviction of the penitent for his allies, (and under all the circumstances of the case there seems to be no stretch of charity in supposing he had,) his victory was one of the most edifying facts in history. Enough

has, perhaps, been said of the spirit displayed by Ambrose in this extraordinary transaction. He well knew his man, and probably had no fear for his own safety. Regard to the soul of his prince was, it is but just to suppose, the end he had in view; but still the worldly aims of a mind ambitious of rule, would have suggested the course adopted by him as his wisest policy. The proceeding, however, had all the ostensible marks of greatness, and being on the side of humanity, and opposed to power, it does not become us, at this distance of time, to question the uprightness of its motives.

The many miracles which owed their acceptance in the world to the name and credit of Ambrose, bring either his integrity or perspicacity under suspicion, unless we are disposed at once to believe them to have been really performed, and suffer our reason to be swamped by the multitude of similar inventions which, with equal claims to belief, are gathered round almost every saint and martyr of Christian antiquity—but particularly of those of the fourth and fifth centuries.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> In the fourth century, the accumulation of miraculous tales and legends, and the wonders wrought by relics, was swelled to an enormous amount, and were collected, accredited, and confirmed by many of the eminent fathers of the church by whom that age was so distinguished. Jerome wrote the *Life of Hilarion*, in which, full credit is given to the extraordinary narratives of that hermit saint, as well as to the strange stories of Paul and Malchus. Gregory of Nyssa was an implicit believer in the miracles attributed to Gregory of Neocæsarea, usually called *Thaumaturgus*; and the great Basil has given us his character in terms which leave us in no doubt of his full acceptance of all the wonders related of him by his brother Gregory Nissenus. We have the life, and all the extraordinary things done by Martin of Tours, recorded by Sulpicius Severus, the best Latin writer of the fourth century, whose work was in the greatest request at Rome, according to his own statement. See the first of his three *Dialogues*.

I do not pronounce upon the title which these miracles have to be believed; but I would observe, that Dr. Dodwell, as well as Dr. Church, in their defence of the primitive miracles, appear by their silence to give up those of the fourth and fifth centuries; and Mr. Dodwell, the father, in speaking of the *Life of Gregory of Neocæsarea* by Gregory of Nyssa, observes, that "in the *Life of Gregory the wonder-worker*, written by Gregory of Nyssa, a bishop of the

On the miracles attending the discovery of the relics of Protasius and Gervasius, it is difficult to speak in a language sufficiently reverent respecting the part acted by Ambrose himself in that religious drama. It should be our wish, if possible, to charge such practices or delusions upon the times in which the espousers and promoters of them lived, rather than on their own heads; but then we should forget that these are the men which gave this character to the times, from which they are to borrow their excuse; if we say that in this incident of the relics Ambrose was deceived by his enthusiasm, we cannot but see that as the miracle answered the two objects of providing for the dedication of the church, and confuting the Arians, with the empress at their head, there was an expediency in the case, which is rarely in the contemplation of the enthusiast. If the discovery was a real miracle, one cannot but remark that it occurred most seasonably to terminate a contest pregnant with disaster.<sup>92</sup>

greatest piety and gravity, there are many things which breathe the air of imposture, and the *genius of the fourth century*; so that I dare not mix them with what is more genuine, for fear of hurting the credit of all." See Mr. Dodwell's *Dissert. Iren.* quoted by Dr. Middleton, *Free Enq.* 128, 129. I would venture to add, that if Gregory of Nyssa, the pious brother of Basil, was under a delusion with respect to some of these miracles, why not as to all? And if such a man suffered himself to be the propagator of spurious miracles, we may well be reserved in listening to others on the same subject. Mr. Dodwell gives his assent only to the primitive miracles down to the period of the establishment of Christianity by human laws; being of opinion that many things concurred to recommend the miracles of the early ages which give no such countenance to those which followed. Of the miracles of the fourth and fifth centuries, perhaps, I may venture to say that those imputed to the bones and remains of saints and martyrs require the strongest attestations to induce belief.

"From *Mede's Apostacie of the latter Times*, from p. 120 to 123.

"The deifying and invoking of saints and adoring of relics is the most ancient for time of all the rest, and began to appear in the church presently after the death of Julian the Apostate, who was the last ethnical emperor; the grounds and occasions whereof were most strange reports of wonders shewed upon those who approached the shrines of martyrs, and prayed at their memories and sepulchres." P. 120.

"Thus the reliques of martyrs beginning to be esteemed above the choicest jewels, for the supposed virtue even of the very air of them, were wonderfully

We will now pass from this transient view of the life and character of St. Ambrose to the production of a few of his letters, which are not in general very interesting as specimens of letter-writing, though many of them are valuable for their spirit and matter. But before I part with this venerable and holy man, it is due to him to say, that many of the qualities which shed the greatest lustre on the human character were his in no inferior degree. In piety, charity, and humanity,

sought after, as some divine elixir, sovereign both to body and soul. Whereupon, another scene of wonders entered, even of visions and revelations, wonderful and admirable for the discovery of the sepulchres and ashes of martyrs, yea, and some whose names and memories till then no man had ever heard of, as St. Ambrose's Gervasius and Protasius. Thus in every corner of the Christian world were new martyrs' bones ever and anon discovered, whose verity miraculous effects and cures seemed to approve; and therefore they were diversely dispersed and gloriously templated and enshrined." P. 121.

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"Babylas's bones were the first that all my search can find which charmed the devil of Daphne, Apollo Daphneus, when Julian the Apostate offered so many sacrifices to make him speak, and being asked why he was so mute, forsooth the corpse of Babylas, the martyr, buried near the temple in Daphne, stopped his wind-pipe." Ibid.

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"Besides the silence of all undoubted antiquity respecting any such sepulchral wonders to have happened in the former ages, the very manner of speech which the fathers living in this miraculous age used when they spake of these things, will argue they were then accounted novelties, and not as continued from the Apostle's times. Chrysostom, in his Oration contra Gentiles, of the business of Babylas thus speaks, *οτις απιστοι τοις υπο των Αποστολων γεγεννημενοις τα παρουντα θεωρων παντοθεν της αναισχυνιας*. If any man believes not these things which are said to be done by the Apostles, let him now, beholding the present, desist from his impudence. Ambrose, Epist. ad Sororem Marcellinam, relating a piece of the speech he made upon the translations of the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius, and the miracles then shewed, *Reparata (saith he) vetusta temporis miracula cernitis*. "You see the miracles of ancient times (he means the times of Christ and his Apostles) renewed." St. Aug. lib. de civ. Dei 22, cap. 8, saith, "We made an order to have bills given out of such miracles as were done, when we saw the wonders of ancient times renewed in ours." But alas! now began the *ιστοριαι καιροι*, this was the fatal time, and thus the Christian apostasy was to be ushered in. If they had known this, it would have turned their joyous shoutings and triumphs, at these things, into mournings."

he seems to have been surpassed by none. The eloquence by which he was greatly distinguished was always devoted to the cause of kindness, virtue, and justice. Of truth, eternal truth, he was a fearless assertor; save that his addiction to Origen may perhaps have made him too much a partaker of some of his aberrations; which principally appear in his expositions of Scripture,—often vague, fanciful, and unsatisfactory. His general learning does not appear to have been very extensive, and his theology was in some particulars defective; but in holy affections, zeal in the ministry, love to the brotherhood, benevolence to all, charity to the poor, spiritual labour, care for the church, heroism in the faith, courage in rebuking vice, and consistency of life and practice, Ambrose was a bright example to the age in which he lived; and has bequeathed that example, to go down together with his valuable delineations of moral duty, to a posterity that will ever hold his name in grateful remembrance. In his treatment of Theodosius, in the guilty crisis of his life which has been already noticed, though, on the whole, the part of Ambrose throughout the transaction was noble in its character and effect, there is yet on it an appearance of prelatical presumption, and an imposing air of priestly domination, which do not bring the archbishop before us in the most amiable Christian attitude. He who does not see in Ambrose's prescription and remission of the amount of formal contrition no stretch of arbitrary authority, must entertain very high ideas of sacerdotal privileges;—he who sees no danger or mistake in a reliance on the virtue of penance and self-punishment, must solace himself with very secondary grounds of pardon and grace;—and he who considers the charge of personal pride and arrogance to be refuted by an ostensible carriage of holiness and humility, must be but little observant of the pliant policy of ambition, and have but a short acquaintance with the labyrinths of the human heart.



GRATIAN AUG. TO AMBROSE, PRIEST OF ALMIGHTY GOD,  
INVITING HIM TO COME TO HIM, TO CONFIRM HIM IN THE  
FAITH, CONCERNING THE DIVINITY OF THE SON, AND HOLY  
SPIRIT.

I DESIRE greatly to be in body present with one of whom I cherish the remembrance when absent, and with whom I converse in mind. Hasten, therefore, unto me, O religious priest of God, that you may instruct me further in the doctrine which I already believe—not because I am ambitious of controversy, or would embrace God in words rather than in mind; but that the divine revelation may be more fully received, and be more settled in my breast. For He will teach me whom I deny not, but confess to be my God and Lord; not making that created nature, which I see in myself, an objection to his claim to adoration; to whom I am sensible I can add nothing, but I wish by proclaiming the Son to commend myself also to the Father. I will not fear jealousy in God. Nor do I consider myself, by any utterance of praise, able to amplify divinity. Infirm and fragile as I am, I praise as far as I am able, not as far as Divinity claims. I pray you let me have that same treatise which you had intended for me, accompanying it with your disputation respecting the Holy Spirit, so faithfully written, that you may strengthen my convictions of his Godhead by scriptures, and by arguments. May the Divinity preserve you many years, who art my parent, and the worshipper of the eternal God whom we adore—Jesus Christ.

AMBROSE, BISHOP, TO THE MOST CHRISTIAN PRINCE  
GRATIAN AUG.

AFFECTION was not wanting, most Christian of Princes,—for there is no word I can use more true and more glorious,—affection, I say, was not wanting, but respect and veneration delayed my availing myself of your condescension, as promptly

my affection disposed me to do. Nevertheless, if I did not meet your returning steps,<sup>20</sup> I met you in mind, I met you in prayers for you,—which are those duties most becoming a priest. Met, did I say? When was I *absent* from one whom I followed with my whole affection; to whom I clung in feeling and sentiment: and, certainly, when the minds of persons are united they are more peculiarly present with each other. I was tracing your daily progress—night and day I was encamped with you, and kept you before me in my prayers and watches: and however weak in merit, yet am I strenuous in affection. While I was humbling myself in prayer for your safety, I was promoting my own. There is no adulation in all this; which you require not; and which I regard as unsuited to my office; but an expression of gratitude for the favours you have bestowed upon me.

Our Disposer himself, whom you confess, and in whom you piously believe, knows how my bowels are refreshed by your faith, your safety, your glory; and that I offer my prayers not only as a public duty, but in private love. For you have restored to me the quiet of my church—you have closed the lips, would that I could add the hearts, of perfidious men; and this you have achieved not less by the authority of your faith than of your power. For what shall I say of your recent letters? You have written a whole letter with your own hand, so that the very handwriting declares your faith and piety. Thus Abraham slew the calf with his own hand, that he might minister to his guests; nor in his religious ministration did he seek the aid of others. But he, a private person, paid homage either to the Lord and angels, or to the Lord in the angels. You, gracious emperor, honour your humble priest with your royal condescension. But the Lord is honoured in his lowest servant; for He has said, “In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

<sup>20</sup> The emperor had just returned from an expedition to the east, into Germany.

But is it only your humility I praise, which in an emperor is sublime; and not rather your faith,—that faith to which your mind, with a consciousness of its own uprightness, has given utterance, taught you by him whom you have not denied? For who else was able to teach you, not to impute to him that created nature, which you see in yourself? No words more appropriate, or more expressive, could have been used: for to call Christ a creature, is to make him rather an object of contumely, than to confess him with reverence. Furthermore, what can be so insulting as to esteem Him to be what *we* are. You, therefore, have instructed me, by whom you are pleased to say you wish to be instructed. How pious, too, was that expression, how admirable, that you do not fear the jealousy of God! You reckon upon a reward from the Father, for the love of the Son; and in giving praise to the Son, you confess that you are unable to add any thing to Him, but that you desire to commend yourself to the Father by giving praise to the Son; all which only He hath taught you, who hath said, “He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father.”

You have added, that being weak and fragile, you did not think yourself able so to praise the Lord as to amplify in words his divinity, and that your praise is such only as you can bestow, not such as Divinity itself demands. This weakness in Christ is made stronger through Him, according to the words of the Apostle, “When I am weak, then am I strong.” This humility excludes fragility.

I will hasten to come to you as you desire, that I may hear and read these things in your presence, and from your own mouth. I have sent the two books, not fearing to submit them to the risk of your approval; meanwhile I ask of the Spirit to pardon the errors of my performance, well knowing who is to be its Judge.

In the mean time your conviction, and the faith you hold concerning the Lord and Saviour, derived from the Son of God himself, expands into that fuller predication, in which the divinity of the Holy Spirit also is comprehended; so that

neither will you impute to Him that created nature which you see in yourself, nor think that God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is jealous of his own Spirit, for that which has nothing in common with created nature is Divine.

LETTER FROM AMBROSE TO HIS SISTER, ON THE DISCOVERY  
OF THE BONES OF GERVASIUS AND PROTASII.

The Brother to the Lady his Sister, to be preferred before his very life and eyes.<sup>21</sup>

As I am wont to make your holiness acquainted with every thing which passes here during your absence, you must know that we have even made a discovery of holy martyrs. For when I was in the act of dedicating a church, many began to interrupt me, crying, as with one voice, "Dedicate it as you dedicate a Roman church."<sup>22</sup> I answered, "I will do so, if I can discover the relics of martyrs." And immediately there arose an ardour that seemed a kind of presage of what followed. Why should I multiply words? The Lord bestowed favour upon us. Even the clergy trembled as they were bidden to clear away the earth from that spot which is before the shrines of St. Felix and St. Nabor. I found the signs which were looked for. When those also were called in to help, on whom I was to lay my hands, the holy martyrs began to be so discernible, that, whilst I still kept silence, an urn was seized, and was laid down at the place of the holy sepulchre. We found two men of astonishing stature, such as a former age produced. All the bones were entire, and there was a quantity of blood. Great was the concourse of the people for the space of two whole days together. Why should I say more? We embalmed the whole remains in the regular manner. On the approach of evening, we transferred them to the church of Fausta. There vigils were kept up the whole

<sup>21</sup> Domine sorori vitæ atque oculis præferendæ frater.

<sup>22</sup> That is to say, by burying in it some relics of saints. The people, it seems, were disappointed, because Ambrose omitted this ceremony, which usually accompanied the dedication of a Roman church.

night long, and an imposition of hands. On the following day we transferred them to the church which they call 'the Ambrosian.' Whilst we were in the act of doing this, a blind man was healed. My discourse to the people was to this effect—'When I considered the vast and unprecedented resort of your whole convent to this place, and the gifts of Divine Grace which have shone forth in these holy martyrs, I judged myself, I confess, to be unequal to this office: nor could I think it possible to express in a sermon what I could scarcely grasp with my mind, or embrace with my eyes. But when the portion of the sacred Scriptures, which came in course, began to be read, the Holy Spirit, who spake in the Prophets, furnished me with the ability of bringing something before you worthy of so large an assembly, of your expectation, and of the merits of the holy martyrs.

"The heavens declare the glory of God." When this Psalm is read, it suggests to us, that not so much the material elements as celestial merits, seem to give forth a proclamation worthy of God. However, by the accidental reading of the place to-day, it has been made manifest what heavens they are that "declare the glory of God." Behold on my right hand, behold on my left, the very sacred rehes; see these men of a heavenly conversation; behold these trophies of a lofty soul. These are "the heavens" which "declare the glory of God." These are "the works of His hands" which "the firmament sheweth." For no worldly inducement, but the divine work of grace, exalted them to the firmament of their most sacred sufferings, and a considerable time before, by the evidence of their manners and their virtues, announced their approaching martyrdom, inasmuch as they stood firmly against the lubricity of this world.

"Paul was 'a heaven,' who says, "our conversation is in heaven." James and John were 'heavens.' They are called, in fact, 'the sons of thunder;' and John, therefore, as 'a heaven,' saw "the Word" who "was with God." The Lord Jesus himself was a heaven of perpetual light when He declared the glory of God,—that glory which no one before had beheld.



And therefore He said, "No one hath seen God at any time, except the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father; He hath declared Him." If you enquire, too, what are "the works of God's hands," hear Job saying, "the Divine Spirit who made me;" and so, being strengthened against the temptations of the devil, he kept the track of an unshaken constancy. But let us come to the rest.

"Day," saith he, "uttereth a word to day." Behold here true days, whom no nightly darkness interrupts. Behold true days, full of light and eternal splendour, who have uttered the word of God, not in a perfunctory discourse, but from their inmost heart, constant in confession, persevering in martyrdom.

Another Psalm, now read, says, "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, and respecteth the low things in heaven and in earth?" Truly God *hath respected* low things, who hath revealed to his church the relics of holy martyrs, which lay hid under the ignoble turf, whose souls are in heaven, their bodies in the ground, "Raising the poor out of the dust, and lifting up the beggar from the dunghill," whom you see how He hath placed "with the princes of His people." Whom else ought we to consider "princes of the people," except the holy martyrs, into the number of whom Protasius and Gervasius, men for a long time before unknown, are now preferred; who will make the church of Milan, barren before of martyrs, to be now the joyful mother of many sons, by the titles and examples of their own passion.

Nor is this at variance with the true faith, "Day unto day uttereth a word," soul unto soul, life unto life, resurrection unto resurrection. "And night unto night sheweth knowledge," that is, flesh unto flesh, whose suffering has shewn unto all the true knowledge of the faith,—good nights, clear nights, which have stars, "For as one star differeth from another star in brightness, so also is the resurrection of the dead."

Truly it is not without reason that most men call this the resurrection of the martyrs. Yet let us see whether the

martyrs have risen to themselves; certainly they have done so to us. You knew it, when you saw, your own selves, many persons cleansed from evil spirits; a great number too, when they touched with their hands the raiment of the saints, freed from those sicknesses under which they laboured. You perceive the miracles of the old time revived, when, on the advent of the Lord Jesus, a greater measure of grace diffused itself over the earth. How many handkerchiefs are spread before us in triumph. How many garments which have acquired a healing virtue, by merely touching these most holy relics, are eagerly claimed! Every one is glad to touch the utmost border of the place, and he who has touched it is made whole. Thanks to thee, Lord Jesus, that at this time thou hast aroused such spirits of the sacred martyrs when thy church stands in need of greater help.<sup>32</sup> All men may know what sort of champions I require, those who are able to fight for us, and who never fight against us. Such I have acquired for you, holy people, those who can profit all, and will hurt no one. Such defenders I am courting,<sup>33</sup>—such soldiers I have,—not soldiers of the world, but soldiers of Christ. No envy do I apprehend from such as these, whose patronage, as it is higher, so it is safer than any other. I wish such guards as these to those very persons who grudge them to me. Let them come then and see my body-guard. With arms like these I do not deny that I am surrounded. “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will be magnified in the name of the Lord our God.”

The course of the Divine Scripture relates that Elisha, when he was besieged by the army of the Syrians, told his trembling servant not to fear, “for,” says he, “there are more for us than against us;” and to prove this, he requested that the eyes of Gehazi might be opened. As soon as they were opened, he saw that an innumerable host of angels were present with

<sup>32</sup> Alluding to the Empress Justina.

<sup>33</sup> This sentence, say the Benedictine editors, was ordered by Charlemagne to be inscribed upon a banner embellished with the figures of Gervastus and Protasius, and carried in procession for the sake of averting a plague.

the Prophet. As for us, although we cannot see them, yet we feel them. These eyes of ours were closed as long as the bodies of these saints were lying hid. The Lord hath opened our eyes; we have seen the auxiliaries by which we have often been defended. We did not see these allies, yet we had them. Therefore, whilst we were trembling, just as if the Lord had said, "See what great martyrs I have given you!" So, "with opened eyes, we behold the glory of the Lord," which is past, in respect of the sufferings of the martyrs; but present, in the wondrous work which they perform. We have escaped, my brethren, from no small burthen of disgrace, the disgrace of having patrons without knowing them. We have found this one thing, in which we appear to outdo our forefathers, the knowledge of holy martyrs, which they lost, and we have recovered.

Noble relics are brought up from an ignoble sepulchre; trophies are displayed to heaven. The tomb is wet with blood; the marks of the victorious gore appear to us; the inviolate relics are discovered in their proper place and order; the head torn from the shoulders. The old men now repeat to us that they heard formerly the names of these martyrs, and read the inscription. The city had lost its own martyrs, the city which had carried away others. Although this is the gift of God to us all; yet I cannot deny the special regard the Lord Jesus has paid to my episcopate; and as I am not worthy to be myself a martyr, I have acquired these martyrs for you.

Let these triumphal victims advance into the place where Christ is the victim (hostia).<sup>34</sup> He is *upon* the altar who suffered for all; they *under* the altar who were redeemed by His passion. This place I had designed for my own self; for it is becoming that the priest should lie where he has been wont to offer; but I yield the right side to the sacred victims;

<sup>34</sup> The note of the Benedictines on this place is curious. "Quid hoc loco expressius ad veram et corporalem Christi in altari sacro præsentiam probandam dici possit, sane non videmus. Omnia illius verba perpendant sectarii, et si quid eis insit sinceritatis ac bonæ fidei, rem fatebuntur."

that place was due to the martyrs. Let us bury, then, the very sacred relics, and carry them to dwellings worthy of them, and let us solemnize the whole day by faithful devotion."

The people shouted out that the interment of the martyrs ought to be deferred to the Lord's day; but it was at last obtained of them that it should be done on the day following. On the following day such was my second sermon to the people.

I handled, yesterday, that little verse, "Day unto day uttereth a word," as far as my mind could reach its sense. To-day the Divine Scripture seems to have prophesied, not only in the former time, but at the present. For when I see your holy thronging kept up day and night, the oracles of the prophetic verse have declared that these are the days, yesterday and to-day, of which it is most opportunely said, "Day unto day uttereth a word;" and these the nights, of which it is most suitably argued, that "night unto night sheweth knowledge." For what have you done on these two days but utter forth the word of God from the depth of your affections, and prove that you have the knowledge of the faith! On which solemnity of yours those whose custom it is to do so, look with envy; and because they cannot in their envious minds endure the celebrity you have thus acquired, they hate its cause; and proceed to such a height of madness as to deny the merits of the martyrs, whose works even the demons confess. But this is not surprising, since such is the perfidy of unbelievers, that for the most part the confession of the devil is more tolerable. For the devil said, "Jesus, thou son of the living God, why hast thou come to torment us before the time?" And when the Jews heard this, they nevertheless denied the Son of God. And now you hear the demons crying out, and confessing to the martyrs, that they could not bear their punishment, and saying, 'Why do you come and so terribly torment us?' And the Arians say, 'These are not martyrs, nor can they torment the devil, or deliver any one,'—when the torments of the demons are proved by their own voice, and the benefits bestowed by the martyrs are declared by the

healing of those who have been cured, and by the testimony of those who have been freed from the demons. *They* deny that the blind is restored to sight, but *he* denies not his cure. *He* says, 'I who saw not, now see.' He says, 'I am no longer blind,' and appeals to the fact. Those who cannot deny the fact, still deny the benefit. The man is well known; his name is Severus; when in health, he was an attendant on public funerals, and is a butcher by trade: he had resigned his office when this impediment happened. He calls those men as witnesses in whose service he was maintained—he summons them to testify to his visitation, having been witnesses of his blindness. He exclaims, that as soon as he touched the hem of the martyrs' vest, in which the sacred relics were wrapped, his sight was restored. Is not this similar to that which we read in the gospel? For we praise the power of the author alone, nor does it signify whether it be a work or a gift—since the one supposes the other; for when He gives the power to others of performing a work, it is His name which operates. We read, therefore, in the Gospel, that the Jews, when they saw the blind man cured, called in the testimony of his parents. They asked them, "How is it that your son sees?" To which he answered, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." This he said himself, "I was blind, and now see." Ask others, if you believe not me—interrogate strangers, lest you should think my parents are in a confederacy with me. The pertinacity of these men is more detestable than that of the Jews. They, when they doubted, at least asked his parents—these men secretly interrogate, but openly deny; not incredulous of the work, but of the Author. But I ask, what is it they do not believe,—that any persons are visited by the martyrs? This is not to believe Christ, for He said himself, "Ye shall do even greater things than these;" or do they deny these things to be done by those martyrs whose merits have long been notorious, and whose bodies have lately been discovered? I ask, whether it is me they envy, or the holy martyrs themselves? If me, then I ask, has this happened by virtue of any thing I have been able to do—by my agency—through



my name? Why, then, envy me that which is not mine? If the martyrs (for if they envy not me, it remains only that they must envy the martyrs), they shew that the martyrs could not have had the same faith which they profess. They could not envy the works of the martyrs without judging them to have been of a different faith from themselves; namely, of that faith which was by the transmission of our ancestors, which the demons themselves cannot deny, though the Arians do. We have heard to-day those who have received the imposition of hands saying, that no one can be saved unless he believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that he is dead, and as good as buried, who denies the Holy Spirit, who believes not the omnipotent virtues of the Trinity. The devil confesses this, but the Arians are unwilling to acknowledge it. The devil says, 'So let him be tortured who denies the deity of the Holy Spirit, as he is himself tortured by the martyrs.' I receive not a testimony from the devil, but a confession. He speaks unwillingly, but through compulsion and torment. What wickedness suppresses, suffering extorts. The devil yields to stripes, and the Arians still know not how to yield. How much have they suffered, and yet, like Pharaoh, they are hardened by their sufferings. The devil said, as we read in Scripture, "I know Thee who Thou art. Thou art the Son of the living God." The Jews said, "We know not who he is." The demons have said to-day, and so they did the last day or night, 'We know that ye are martyrs.' And the Arians say, 'We know not, we are unwilling to understand or believe.' The demons say to the martyrs, 'Ye have come to destroy us.' The Arians say, 'These are not the real torments of demons, but fictitious and contrived mockery.' I have heard of many contrivances, but this no man could ever feign—that he was a demon. What can be said of this,—that those who have received imposition of hands are thus agitated? What room for fraud can be here—what suspicion of artifice? But I do not use the voice of demons as a testimony to the martyrs. Their sacred passion is proved by its benefits. It has judged, but more, judges freed from corruption; and witnesses, but

more, witnesses absolved. The better voice is that which is uttered by the saints of those who were crucified. The better voice is that which their blood wrote forth—for that blood has a sonorous voice, which reaches from earth to heaven. You have read the words of God,—"The blood of thy brother crieth unto me." And this blood cries out by the evidence of its colour—it cries out by the proclamation of its work—it cries out in the triumph of the passion. Your petition has been granted, that we should defer the ceremony of entombing the relics from yesterday to this day.

Who that holds sacred the memory of St. Ambrose would not wish that so revered a name had never been connected with this transaction, to which I will leave the reader to annex such epithets as he thinks may be most appropriate. There can hardly be more than one opinion of the merits of the above harangue. As a specimen of oratory it is upon a level with the story. In a more intelligent age it would surely have brought no credit to the miracle, and would have lent an advantage to the Arian and the infidel.

But however we may account for any excess of credulity in Ambrose, he must be allowed to have been a person of general gravity and judgment, no less on matters of faith than of practice. He was one of the acknowledged pillars of the church—a strenuous and able maintainer of the scriptural doctrine of the consubstantial Trinity, yet by no means exempt from some of the puerilities and eccentricities by which the age in which he lived was characterized. St. Augustine, who received baptism at his hands, and his early lessons from his lips, and was his great admirer and follower, has borne a strong testimony to the matter and manner of his teaching, in language peculiarly his own, and not easy to be translated. "*Ejus eloqui strenuo ministrant adipem frumenti divini, et lætitiæ olei, et sobriam vini ebrietatem.*"<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> In his discourse on the 118th Psalm, some strange notions occur of a baptism by fire at the end of the world, *quando per carnum ignis iniquitas*

We must still do this great light of the church the justice to observe, that though some of his opinions were rather luxuriant and fanciful, and not of the safest tendency, his moral and social character was amiable and exemplary, and that the play upon his name by Erasmus was in many respects supported by the tenour of his conversation among men, no less than by the correctness of his great doctrines. "Ambrosius, according to his name, doth truly flow with heavenly ambrosia; who is worthy of his title, i. e. *immortal*, not with Christ only, but also among men." If the following letter in the Benedictine edition of this father is justly attributed to him, it testifies remarkably to the soundness of his practical views of moral conduct. It appears to have been written to one of his disciples, and is in the following terms.

"My dear Son, love your tears; do not put them off: in proportion as you have been prompt to the commission of a fault, be prompt to lament it. Let nothing make you careless under a sense of sin. If you are unable to avoid, at least restrain anger. Great glory is it to spare, where you have the power of inflicting an injury. Do not retaliate upon one who has sinned against you, according to his faults; knowing that judgment is coming upon yourself. Hate separates a man from the kingdom, withdraws him from heaven, casts him out of Paradise. In all your actions imitate the good, emulate the holy. Have always before your eyes the examples of the saints. Keep company only with the good, since if you are a companion of their conversation, you will become also the companion of their virtue. It is hazardous to be associated

exuretur; in which imagination he appears to have followed St. Hilary. In his books *De Virginitate*, *De Institutione Virginis*, and his *Exhortatio Virginitatis*, the estate of matrimony is placed in a light for which he has no scriptural warrant, or foundation in the experience of mankind. Add to this, that some peculiar opinions seem to have been entertained by this Father on the subject of adultery, which cannot be commended for their soundness, safety, or sobriety, and may serve as an exposition of the peculiar phrase of Augustine in characterizing his work "*Sobrium vinu ebrietatem*."

with those whose lives are bad ; better have their hate than their fellowship. An idle discourse quickly stains the thoughts ; and what is willingly listened to, very readily passes into practice. Let that only go from your lips which will carry no pollution to the ear. The mind is dependent upon the tongue ; and is tried and proved by it ; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Withhold any word from utterance which edifies not the hearers ; since he who represses not an idle word, is quickly drawn into mischief. Do not defile your own mouth with another's iniquity. Do not detract from one who has committed a fault, but give him counsel. Correct your own life by observing the lives of others. Defend the life of no man by giving it a false colour. Let neither stripes nor death itself terrify you, so long as your life is virtuous and pious. A curious spirit tends to hazardous presumption. Love rather to hear than speak ; and to listen than talk. They are equally culpable who consent to evil, and commit evil ; punishment will be the constant result of doing or acquiescing in wickedness. Whatsoever you do with sound discretion must be virtue ; but virtue not accompanied with prudence is in the same estimation as vice. Let your testimony injure no man. Let your conversation be irreprehensible, meriting the acceptance and commendation of all. Turn not aside from right judgment out of regard to any man, whether rich or poor. Look to the cause, and not the person. Distribute justice on a principle of proportionate retribution. He who pays regard only to present benefits has no prospect to future glory. In dispensing justice never lose sight of mercy. That justice is impious which makes no allowance for human frailty. Do not despise any case coming before you for judgment, and condemn no one on arbitrary grounds of suspicion. Human judgment is always liable to deception. Avoid honours which you cannot hold without blame. If honours exalt us, they make our crimes the greater. The higher our rank the more conspicuous is our delinquency ; and the lower we are, the nearer are we to pardon. No one administers worldly affairs without sin. It is a wonder if a

man abounding in wealth cultivates quiet. He who entangles himself in the things of earth, separates himself from heaven. No man, at the same time, can cultivate God's favour and that of the world. It is hard to love both God and the world. Abstain from all commerce with him whom the world loves. Detach yourself from all business, as one dead to this world. As one buried to the world, have no care for it. While you are living, despise what after death you cannot retain. Have compassion upon all, without distinction; for it is uncertain by compassionating whose case you may most please God. Take not from one to give to another; nor exercise compassion at another's expense. Such commiseration brings no credit with it, but rather condemns you. The good you do, let it not be boastfully, but feelingly done; for if praise is your object, your reward is forfeited. Rewards are promised to the just, in heaven, not during their stay on earth. Pay attention to whatever you read: and what you respect in reading, do not shew contempt for by your mode of living.

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The tone and tendency of the above letter, which is very like the discourse of Isocrates addressed to Demonicus, presents Ambrose to us as a person very observant of the social duties, and practical moralities of life. It seems as if it was meant as a system of plain precepts for the guidance of one who had long been under his especial instruction, and was about to fill some place of ecclesiastical authority and responsibility. The rules may not be very new or surprizing; nor are they set off by any antitheses, or other artifices of diction, for in counsel meant for the direction of daily conduct, use rather than ornament is to be consulted, and the mind is to be furnished with what it is to handle and apply, rather than with what it is to admire and applaud.



AMBROSIIUS TO BELLICUS: ON THE CURE OF THE MAN BLIND  
FROM HIS NATIVITY.

You have heard, my brother, that Gospel read, in which it is related that the Lord Jesus, as he passed along, saw a man who had been blind from his birth. If the Lord saw him, he did not pass him by; wherefore we ought not to pass by him whom the Lord thought should not be so passed by, especially a man blind *from his nativity*, which circumstance was not made a part of the transaction without a particular meaning. There is a blindness of the eyes which is the effect of disease, and which, after a time, is relieved. There is a blindness which is produced by a thickening of the humours, and this also, when the impediment is removed, is expelled by the medical art; but when one born blind is cured, it is done that you may know that it is the effect of power, and not of art. The Lord gave the cure, he did not exert medical skill; He cured those whom no one else could restore. How foolish then were the Jews, who asked whether the man himself had sinned, or his parents; considering the diseases of the body as the merited punishment of the sufferer. Therefore the Lord said, "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Thus what was a defect of nature, it was in the power of the Creator to repair, who was the Author of nature. Whence he added, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." That is, all who are blind may see, if they take me for their light. Approach ye then, and be enlightened, that you may be able to see.

In the next place, how are we to understand the fact, that He who gave up his life to the ruling authority, restored the dead to life by his own command, saying to the dead man, "Come forth," and Lazarus came forth from the sepulchre: saying to the paralytic, "Arise, take up thy bed," and the paralytic took up his bed, and began to carry that himself, in which his whole length had reposed: what, I say, could

be intended by the fact, that he spat and made clay, and anointed the eyes of the blind, and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation 'Sent:' he went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing." And what is implied by this? Much, if I mistake not; for he whom Jesus touches sees more than others.

Observe in this transaction the divinity and sanctity of the Saviour. The light, as it were, touched the man, and light was imparted. As a Priest, by the figure of baptism, he accomplished the mysteries of spiritual grace. He spat, that you might see that the interior of Christ was full of light. He who is cleansed by the interior of Christ, sees clearly. His saliva washes; his discourse washes; as you read in Scripture, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." But in making clay and anointing the eyes of the blind, what else was designed but that He who out of clay formed man, restored man to health by anointing with *clay*; and that this flesh of our clay, by the sacrament of baptism, received eternal life. Come *you* then to Siloam, that is, to him who was sent by the Father, as it is said, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." Let Christ wash *you*, that *you* may see. Come to his baptism; now is the very time; come with haste, that you may say, "I went, and washed, and I received sight;" that *you* may say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see;" that *you* may say, as *he* said on whom light had been shed abundantly, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

Blindness was night. It was night when Judas received the sop from Jesus, and Satan entered into him. It was night to Judas where the Devil was. To John it was day, when he reclined on the bosom of Christ. To Peter it was also day when he saw the splendour of Christ on the mount. It was night to others, but day to Peter. And truly to Peter himself it was night when he denied Christ. At last the cock crew, and he began to weep, in repentance of his error, for now the day approached.

The Jews interrogated the blind man, "How were thine

eyes opened? Egregious folly! They asked to be informed of that which they themselves saw. They asked how it could be done, when they saw the fact before them. "And they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple." *Their* reviling was *his* blessing, as their benediction would have been a curse. "Thou art his disciple," say they. They confer a benefit when they design an injury. Farewell, my son; continue to love us as you do, because we love you.

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The letter last produced is a fair specimen of St. Ambrose's manner of exposition. It seems to me (I speak it with unfeigned reverence towards a great and holy man) to savour too much of ingenuity for the perspicuous grandeur of the subject. The miracle commends itself sufficiently to our homage and admiration, without any need of human industry to elicit recondite meanings or allusions from the plain narrative.

TO CERTAIN OF THE CLERGY WHO WERE IN DESPONDENCY  
ON ACCOUNT OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND LABOURS BY  
WHICH THEY WERE BESET.

THE minds of men are often in a stealthy manner so enfeebled and overcome by some slight obstacle, if things do not spontaneously accord with their wishes and second their zeal, as to be induced to retire from their official stations; which may be borne with in any other class of men, but which, in those who are engaged in divine employments, fills one with sorrow. For there are some in the clerical office into whom the enemy steals unawares; so that, if in no other way he is able to beguile them, he may find his way into their wounded minds by insinuating thoughts such as these. "What does it profit me to remain in the ministry, to submit to injuries, to endure hardships, as if my own property was not enough to support me; or, if property were wanting, as if I were not able to draw my living from some other source." By such

thoughts as these even men of good morals are induced to withdraw from their situations in the Church. As if it was the only concern of a priest to provide for his expenditure, and not rather to lay up for himself a divine maintenance after his death; although *his* will be the abundance after this life is over, who, safe in this world, has been able to contend against so many snares of his enemies as surround him here.

Whence the Preacher says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour; for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow."<sup>36</sup> Where are two better than one, unless where Christ is, and he whom Christ defends? Because, if *he* falls who is with the Lord Jesus, Jesus will lift him up. But with what meaning is it said, *in their labour*? Does Christ then labour? Truly He does labour who says, "I have laboured, crying out:" but He labours in us. "Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well." But how He labours, the Apostle teaches us by his own inferior example. "Who is weak, and I am not weak?"<sup>37</sup> And the Lord himself has taught us in his own words. "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not."<sup>38</sup> He labours, that he may lift me up when falling. Thus in Elisha, the Lord went forth, and threw himself on the child, that He might raise up the dead body: in which we see the symbol, that Christ is dead with us that he might rise with us. Christ threw himself down even to our weakness and low estate, that he might lift us up. He cast himself down; he did not fall, but he lifted up his fellow. For his fellows he made us, as it is written, "He was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows." Whence Ecclesiastes beautifully says, "For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow." He is not himself lifted up. Christ was not lifted up by another's help, but he raised himself. Lastly, He says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This He said, speaking of the temple of his body. Nor was He who did not fall raised up; he who has fallen is raised up.

<sup>36</sup> Eccl. iv. 9.<sup>37</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 29.<sup>38</sup> Matt. xxv. 43.

by another; he needs assistance to lift him up, as the words that follow teach us, "But woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up." Again, "If two lie together, then they have heat." We are dead with Christ, and therefore we live. Christ was dead with us, that he might warm us; He who says, "I am come to send fire on the earth."<sup>39</sup> I was dead; but because in my baptism I was dead with Christ, I received the light of life from Christ. He who dies in Christ, being made warm by Christ, receives the vapour of life and resurrection. The child was cold, and Elisha warmed him with his spirit: he imparted to him the vital heat. He lay with him in sleep, that the quiet warmth of him who was thus symbolically buried with him might bring him to life. He, therefore, is cold who does not die in Christ: he cannot be warmed whom the glowing fire does not approach. Neither can he who has not Christ with him make another warm.<sup>40</sup>

#### AMBROSIUS TO SYRICIUS.

It is very agreeable to me to receive letters from you. But when you employ one of our community in the Lord's service, as Syrus, our brother and fellow-presbyter, to bring your letters, my joy is doubled. But I wish this fruit could have been longer enjoyed! for as soon as he came, he began to think of running back again; which, indeed, much abridged the pleasure I so much desired, but added greatly to the interest I felt in him. For I love those, whether Presbyters or Deacons, who, when they take a journey anywhere, never suffer themselves to be absent from their duty longer than necessity requires. For the prophet says, *Non laboravi se-*

<sup>39</sup> A most extraordinary application of the passage.

<sup>40</sup> The letter runs out in the same style to considerable length. It is another specimen of the manner in which this good man generally applies and expounds passages from the Scriptures in very remote senses, and such as create surprise in the simple student of divine lore. There is much rambling divinity in Ambrose's exercises of thought and fancy, correct as he certainly is in all the great dogmas.



quens post te;—It has been no labour to me to follow thee.<sup>41</sup> Who can feel it labour to follow Jesus, when He says, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Let us then always follow Jesus without ceasing. If we always follow him, we shall never faint; He gives strength to those that follow him. The nearer, therefore, you are to virtue, the stronger you will be.

Often, when we are following Him, our adversaries say to us, "Where is the word of the Lord? let it come now."<sup>42</sup> But we are not tired of following, nor are turned aside by being opposed by such a subtle interrogation. This was said to the prophet when he was sent to prison, and immersed in a miry dungeon. But he only followed the more, and therefore obtained the reward of victory; thus he received the crown, because he felt it no labour to follow Jesus; for "there is no labour in Jacob, nor sorrow in Israel." Farewell, and continue to love us; for we love those that love us, and especially our parent.<sup>43</sup>

#### AMBROSIOUS TO SEGATIUS AND DELPHINUS, BISHOPS.

POLYBIUS, our son, on his return from the African coast, where he, with great reputation, exercised the proconsular jurisdiction, spent a few days with us, and inspired me with the deepest affection for him. Afterwards, when he was about to return, he requested me to write to each of you. I promised it should so be done. And accordingly dictated an epistle, and gave it to him, addressed to both of you. He demanded another letter. I said that, according to my custom, I had addressed it to both of you, in order that your minds

<sup>41</sup> In our authorized Bible, the words are, "As for me I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee;" which is a strict translation of the Hebrew. Ambrose cites from the Vulgate and the Septuagint. *Εγὼ δὲ οὐκ ἐκώλυσα κατὰ τὴν ἀνάγκην ὁππότε σὺ παρ.*

<sup>42</sup> Jerem. xvii. 13.

<sup>43</sup> An appellation he gives to Syncius, whom in another letter he calls his brother, for they seem to be the same person,—probably the Bishop of Rome.

might be gratified, not by the number of the epistles, but by the conjunction of your names; nor could it be endured that you should be separated in words, when you are one in affection; and I thought it my privilege to use the compendium which this mutual love afforded. What more need be added? He still insisted upon another letter. I gave him another, that I might neither deny him what he required, nor alter my own usage. Thus he had what he might render to each; for his only reason for requiring two letters was, that, when he had given a letter to one, he might not go empty-handed to the other; and I was thus enabled to discharge my duty to you of undivided attachment without the risk of offending either, or any punctilio as to the separate claims; especially, too, as this mode of letter-writing is apostolical, as where one writes to many, as Paul to the Galatians; and two write to one, as we find in Scripture, "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timotheus his brother, to Philemon." I send health to you both. Love us, and pray for us, for I love you.

AMBROSIVS TO ATTICUS, COMMENDING PRISCUS, A COMMON  
FRIEND, AND THE BEARER OF LETTERS  
BETWEEN THEM.

I HAVE sent letters to you by Priscus. My friend Priscus has brought letters to me, and I have given letters to Priscus. I beg you to continue your wonted affection to this Priscus; and more than your wonted affection; which I intreat for him, because you are to know that I myself make a great deal of my friend Priscus. My affection for him is of old standing (*priscus amor*<sup>44</sup>). Commencing with our boyhood, it has grown and increased with our age. It was after a long lapse of years that I saw him again; so that not only in name was he Priscus, but he came really priscus to me, by the long interval which had been interposed between our meetings. Farewell. Continue to love us, who love you.

<sup>44</sup> This pun. or play upon the word *priscus*, in so grave a man, is amusing and pleasing.

## AMBROSIUS TO ALYPIUS.

ANTIOCHUS, a consular man, delivered me your letters; nor have I neglected my duty to answer them, for I sent letters by some of my people, and, if I mistake not, another opportunity presenting itself, I despatched a duplicate. But because I feel that the offices of friendship ought not to be measured out, but piled up, I thought it behoved me, especially as the bearer was returning, who had brought me so great a present of letters from you, to charge him with the carriage of some communication from me, that I towards both of you, and he to you especially, might be acquitted, since he was under an obligation to give you back as much as he had received. Farewell, and continue to love those who love you.

## AMBROSIUS TO ANTONIUS.

You are never silent to me, nor do I ever complain that I am cast off, by your omitting to write to me, because I know assuredly that I always have a place in your bosom. For as you bestow upon me what is of more value, how can you deny me that which is often lavished upon many, not so much out of the habit of friendship, as the interchange of business? I judge of your mind by my own, so as to be persuaded that I am never absent from you, as you are not from me; for we adhere to each other in our thoughts. I never think that our correspondence ceases, as I am daily conversing with you, directing my eyes, my affections, and all my dutiful regards towards you. With these feelings I am delighted to hold converse with you; for your letters, to speak openly with one who is a participator in all the sentiments of my bosom, make me rather ashamed. Wherefore, I intreat you to waive in future all expressions of gratitude, since the greatest reward I can receive for the discharge of my duty towards you will be, to be thought by you not to be deficient in acquitting myself of that duty. Farewell, and continue to love us, as you are beloved by us.

## AMBROSIUS TO CANDIDIANUS, HIS BROTHER.

THERE is, indeed, the greatest splendour in your discourse; but to me it principally shines, in the affection it breathes towards me. It is in your epistles that I perceive the brilliancy of your mind, my much loved brother. May the Lord bless you, and give you his grace; for I recognize in your letters your kind wishes, and not my own deserts; for what deserts of mine can be on a level with such compositions as yours? Love us, my brother, as you are loved by us.

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Ambrose was born about the year 333, and died on the 14th of April 397. A period full of great events, the greatest of which was the final triumph of Christianity over the polluted system of heathen idolatry, throughout the Roman world. The part which Symmachus took in opposition to Ambrose, brings him conspicuously before us; and in him we recognize one of the greatest letter-writers in this last period of his country's destiny. His letters, which have been preserved, are numerous enough to be divided and arranged in ten books. He was invested with all the civil and sacerdotal honours of the Pagan constitution of Rome, possessed of great influence, a senator, pontiff, augur, proconsul of Africa, and præfect of the city. In his letters, written in a florid style, he is supposed to have principally imitated Pliny, whom his flattering friends pronounced him to equal or excel.<sup>45</sup> But in the opinion of Gibbon, his luxuriancy consisted of barren leaves, without fruit, and even without flowers. Few facts and few sentiments can be extracted from his verbose correspondence." The passage in Gibbon, in which he introduces Symmachus to his readers, contains some interesting particulars respecting the religious state of Rome when Ambrose and Symmachus took the field, in the great and final contest

<sup>45</sup> Macrob. Saturnal. l. v. c. i.

between inveterate error and effulgent truth. The Christians, says the historian, formed the least numerous party in the senate of Rome; and it was only by their absence that they could express their dissent from the legal though profane acts of a Pagan majority. In that assembly, the dying embers of freedom were, for a moment, revived and inflamed by the breath of fanaticism. Four respectable deputations<sup>46</sup> were successively voted to the imperial court, to represent the grievances of the priesthood and the senate, and to solicit the restoration of the altar of Victory. And the conduct of this important business was entrusted to Symmachus, whose breast was animated by the warmest zeal for the cause of expiring paganism; and his religious antagonists lamented the abuse of his genius, and the inefficacy of his moral virtues. The orator, whose petition to the Emperor Valentinian is extant, was conscious of the difficulty and danger of the office which he had assumed. He endeavours to seduce the imagination of a young prince by displaying the attributes of the goddess of victory; he insinuates that the confiscation of the revenues which were consecrated to the service of the gods, was a measure unworthy of his liberal and disinterested character; and maintains that the Roman sacrifices would be deprived of their force and energy, if they were no longer celebrated at the expense, as well as in the name of the republic.

The philosophic historian concludes his draught of this celebrated letter in the following descriptive terms. "Even scepticism was made to supply an apology for superstition. It was argued that the great and incomprehensible secret of the universe eludes the enquiry of man; and every nation seems to consult the dictates of prudence, by a faithful attachment to those rites and opinions which have received the sanction of ages. If those ages have been crowned with glory and prosperity, if the devout people have frequently obtained

<sup>46</sup> The first, in 382, to Gratian, who refused them audience. The second, 384, to Valentinian, when Ambrose and Symmachus were combatants. The third, 388, to Theodosius. And the fourth to Valentinian II. See Lardner. Heath. Test. iv. 372.



the blessings which they have solicited at the altars of the gods, it must appear still more advisable to persist in the same salutary practice, and not to risk the unknown perils that may attend any rash innovations. The test of antiquity and success was applied with singular advantage to the religion of Numa; and Rome herself, the celestial genius that presided over the fates of the city, is introduced by the orator to plead her own cause before the tribunal of the emperors.

‘Most excellent princes,’ says the venerable matron, ‘fathers of your country! pity and respect my age, which has hitherto flowed in an uninterrupted course of piety. Since I do not repent, permit me to continue in the practice of my ancient rites. Since I am born free, allow me to enjoy my domestic institutions. This religion has reduced the world under my laws. These rites have repelled Hannibal from the city, and the Gauls from the capitol. Were my grey hairs reserved for such intolerable disgrace? I am ignorant of the new system, which I am required to adopt, but I am well assured that the correction of old age is always an ungrateful and ignominious office.’

“The fears of the people supplied what the discretion of Symmachus had suppressed; and the calamities which afflicted or threatened the declining empire were unanimously imputed by the pagans to the new religion of Christ, and of Constantine. But the hopes of Symmachus were repeatedly baffled by the firm and dexterous opposition of Ambrose; who fortified the emperors against the fallacious eloquence of the advocates of Rome. In this controversy, Ambrose condescended to speak the language of a philosopher, and to ask with some contempt, why it should be thought necessary to introduce an imaginary and invisible power, as the cause of those victories, which were sufficiently explained by the valour and discipline of the legions. He justly derides the absurd reverence for antiquity, which could only tend to discourage the improvements of art, and to replunge the human race into their original barbarism. From thence, gradually rising to a more lofty and theological tone, he pronounces that Christi-

anity alone is the doctrine of truth and salvation ; and that every mode of polytheism conducts its deluded votaries, through the paths of error, to the abyss of eternal perdition. Arguments like these, when suggested by a favourite bishop, had power to prevent the restoration of the altar of victory ; but the same arguments fell, with much more weight and effect, from the mouth of a conqueror ; and the gods of antiquity were dragged in triumph at the chariot-wheels of Theodosius. In a full meeting of the senate, the emperor proposed, according to the forms of the republic, the important question, whether the worship of Jupiter, or that of Christ, should be the religion of the Romans."

The historian proceeds with his narration thus. "On a regular division of the senate, Jupiter was condemned and degraded by the sense of a very large majority ; and it is rather surprising that any members should have been found bold enough to declare, by their speeches and votes, that they were still attached to the interest of an abdicated deity. The hasty conversion of the senate must be attributed to supernatural or sordid motives ; and many of the reluctant proselytes betrayed, on every favourable occasion, their secret disposition to throw off the mask of odious dissimulation."

Such were some of the remarks of Gibbon on an occurrence greatly distinguished among those which the history of these times has preserved to us. It took place in the year 388 A. D. which may therefore be considered as the period of the complete conversion of the Roman state. Till the time of Gratian the Christian emperors had permitted themselves to be invested with the dress and dignity of the supreme pontiff ; but Gratian put an end to all these symbols of the ancient superstition, and abolished a long train of rites, ceremonies, and offices, which still maintained in existence a large portion of the external fabric of heathenism. The augurs, the vestals, the flamens, the fraternities of the Salians and Lupercals, and many other sacerdotal and civil institutions, which had been continued from the reign of Numa to that of Gratian, terminated with the accession of that emperor ; the early days of

whose government were marked by a zeal beyond that of his predecessors in the cause of Christianity. But paganism was still in name and usage the constitutional religion of the empire. In the chamber or hall where the senate assembled still stood the statue and altar of Victory—the stately figure of a female, standing on a globe, with a crown of laurel in her hand; and on this altar the senators were sworn to observe the laws of the empire. The altar of Victory had been removed by Constantius, restored by Julian, and again ejected by Gratian. Still, however, paganism, either wholly or in part, was the religion of the majority of the senate, which continued to solicit the restoration of this cherished monument of heathen grandeur.

To the Emperor Theodosius was reserved the glory of establishing the Christian faith upon the ruins of the old superstition, not only in Rome but throughout the provinces. His decrees were decisive and peremptory against the auguries, the sacrifices, and all the services and ceremonies of the heathen temples. The fabulous throng of deities with which the heavens had so long been peopled by superstition was discarded, and allowed a place only in the machinery of poetry and the province of fiction.

I have dwelt a little on the general state of this period of the Roman history, which was at this epoch the history of the world, the better to shew the circumstances in which the persons were placed whose correspondence is now to be set before the reader. It was a period much distinguished by a kind of ambition in the graces of letter-writing; and, as is always the case with every attainment coupled with the vanity of display, it became disfigured by much affected ornament and inflated common-place. The letters interchanged between Symmachus and Ausonius will support this observation. They were both courtiers, and both learned men. Ausonius was the tutor and familiar friend of the Emperor Gratian, and a considerable poet, though some of the products of his pen deserve only to be mentioned with execration. Symmachus was, as has sufficiently appeared, a decided pagan, but Auso-

nius seemed to be half christian and half heathen, in so much that, in the various mention of him by critics and historians, he passes under both these denominations. The probability is, that he possessed but little concern for the prevalence of the one or the other belief, so as at the shrine of his own vanity there was enough of the worship of adulation.

## SYMMACHUS TO AUSONIUS.

You desire me to write longer letters; and in this desire you testify your affection for me. But I am too conscious of the poverty of my intellect not to adopt, in my correspondence with you, a discreet brevity, rather than proclaim in many pages the sterility of my resources. And what wonder if my store is impoverished, after being so long without the advantage of any communication from you, either in poetry or prose. Until I am in your debt on our literary account, how can you fairly charge me with a long interest. Your divine verses on the Moselle<sup>a</sup> is in the hands and bosoms of multitudes, but I was to be favoured only with a glimpse of it. Why, I would ask, was I to be denied this privilege? Was it because I am a stranger to the Muses, and incapable of discerning the merits of such a performance, or too envious to do it justice? You have taken from me the credit either of my discernment, or my candour. I would have you to know, however, that, in spite of your interdict, I have intruded myself into the secret of your performance; and I could almost have wished to hide from you my opinion of it, that so I might revenge myself upon you by my silence, but the sense of injury has been sunk at once in my admiration of this poem. I became acquainted with the Moselle when I was following the standards of our

<sup>a</sup> The poem of Ausonius on the river Moselle was his principal work. It contains many very vigorous verses, and must be acknowledged to be written throughout with great freedom, force, and elegance. He filled successively the highest offices of the state: and when consul, being at Trèves, he was so pleased with the amenity of the river above-mentioned, as to make it the subject of celebration in an extended poem.

immortal princes, and considered it upon a par with many of our great, though not with our greatest rivers: but you have raised it by your illustrious verses to a dignity above the Egyptian Nile;—in your poem it has a more luxurious freshness than the frigid Tanais, and a brighter transparency than our own Fucinus.<sup>40</sup> I am so well acquainted with your fondness for this river, that, did I not know how incapable you are of falsifying facts, even in a poem, I should not have trusted your accounts of its origin, or its course. But pray let me ask you where you have discovered those multitudes of fishes; as diversified by their names as by their colours, magnitudes, and flavour; to which, it must be owned, you have given somewhat of a painted life and beauty, beyond the gifts of nature: and how comes it that, although I have often been a guest at your table, where, among the many objects that have attracted my attention, the things presented to the palate were not the least, I have never met with the kind of fishes you describe in your poem. Having given birth to these fish in your poem, why have you not given them to your friends among the dishes at your table.

Joking apart, I solemnly aver, that I rank your work with the productions of Maro. But I will no longer dwell on your praises, forgetful of my own wrongs, lest your glory should receive this further accession—that it compels the admiration of one whom you have offended. If you shall thus continue to spread abroad your productions, without admitting me to a participation, I must be content to owe my enjoyment to the kindness of others. Farewell.

#### THE SAME TO THE SAME.

IF I could, without interruption, employ myself wholly in proclaiming your deserts, I should still seem to myself to have imperfectly discharged my obligation in this respect; so far is

<sup>40</sup> A lake in Italy, in the country of the Marsi, in the further Abruzzo. Plin. iii. 12.



my duty towards you from being a work at which I repine. But though this is an employment which well becomes the veneration in which I hold your superiority; yet, remember, you are not to expect this homage and devotion without some returns of grace and favour on your part. Now see on what these observations are meant to bear. It is a long time since you have furnished me with any thing from your pen to read and meditate upon: and the excuse you offer is the engrossing duties of your office of pretorian prefect. It is true—you have been deservedly called to a jurisdiction of supreme importance; but your great abilities are more than equal to all the business which your brilliant fortune has brought with it. Be persuaded, therefore, not to withdraw your attention wholly from those elegant employments, which are so far from being troubles to men of business, that they are the best alleviators of their troubles. Farewell.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

As in many things our ancestors manifested their wisdom, so did they conspicuously in this—that they placed together the temples of Honour and Virtue, like twin sisters; intending thereby to shew what we see exemplified in you, that where we find the rewards of honour there we find also the merits of virtue. And not far from these stands the shrine of the Camenæ, with their sacred fountain, to denote the tendency of liberal learning to promote our political advancement. The reasons of your own advancement may be read in these lessons and institutes of our ancestors. It is your gravity of morals, and your resemblance to the model of ancient discipline, which have raised you to the curule seat. Many will by your example be taught to rely upon solid accomplishments, genuine merit, and correct learning. History, indeed, abounds with instances of the niggard hand with which princes have rewarded the abilities which have adorned their own annals. The Stagirite was nothing the better for the brilliant successes of his all-conquering pupil; and it was a great blemish on the cha-

racter of Fulvius, that out of his *Ætolie* spoils a cloak was the only gift bestowed on Quintus Ennius.\* Nor did the second of the *Africani* do more for Panætius, nor Rutilius for Opillus, Pyrrhus for Cineas, or Mithridates for Metrodorus: these all let their instructors in the liberal arts go without their reward. But our truly erudite emperor, abounding in wealth and honour, has rewarded you in the proportion of your merits. In the midst of my joy in hearing of your prosperity, what words can declare how vexatious I feel it to be prevented from being with you at this juncture. I am sore afraid lest, by a wrong construction of the motives of my absence, you may be induced to doubt the sincerity of my congratulations. I longed with the greatest impatience to transport myself to you. But enfeebled by indisposition, I have been afraid to undertake a long journey, with rough accommodations on the road, the days growing shorter and colder, and other such like inconveniences. If you feel as a sincere friend towards me, I entreat you to be candid in the light in which you view these excuses. It is somewhat doubtful whether, after this conduct on my part, notwithstanding my reasons above given, I shall ever again rise as high in your favour as heretofore. My present care is to avoid giving you any just ground for complaint; and having done that, I am at ease.

## SAME TO SAME.

AFTER your long silence, I expected as well as desired longer letters; for it is agreeable to the changeable character of all human things that scarcity should be followed by abundance. But my hopes were nevertheless disappointed; for your last was about a page in length. It was, indeed, sprinkled with Attic salt, and fragrant as thyme; but it reminds me of those sparing repasts which may suffice to stay the stomach, but

\* Q. Ennius, the author of tragedies, comedies, annals, and satires, born about 238 years B. C. followed M. Fulvius Nobilior in his expedition to *Ætolia*.

not to appease hunger. What if I were to ask of you a plentiful meal, a feast of the *Salm* (*saliare convivium*), a substantial board; would you put me off with a second course of little delicacies only? Remember what the Greek aphorism says, "With nutriments ever so sparing and light, a man may be kept from death, but not supported in strength." You seem to fear lest I should make no account of your occupations. Well then you are *Questor*, I remember; one of the Emperor's Council, I know. Add to these, if you please, a thousand other engagements. It never yet has happened that labour has worn down your faculties, or care blunted your benignity, or use exhausted your resources. If you never repose from your daily toils, surely you will snatch an interval from sleep before the day begins to bestow upon your friends. But why, for want of something more to the purpose, do I allow myself to run on in this idle way? I will take for my example your last letter, as your other excellent habits. Perhaps you may be too much occupied to read long letters; and I think it must be so, for this reason, that he who has not leisure to write, can have as little to read. Farewell.

## SAME TO SAME.

Your letters, which I received during my stay at Capua, delighted me by the proof they gave of your erudition. To their own natural gaiety were superadded the snavity of the Ciceronian style; nor can I forbear to mention among their recommendations the praise they bestow upon the performances of my pen, more flattering, I fear, than true. I am in doubt which most to admire—the grace which breathes in your eloquence, or that which glows in your bosom. In truth, you so surpass others in the elegancies of expression, that one is afraid to answer your letters. And yet so kind is your approbation of my humble performances, that I cannot, with common gratitude, be silent. But what to do I don't know; for if I should dilate upon your excellencies, I shall appear to be inviting a regular commerce of flattery; and to be not simply

an approver, but an imitator of the kind things you say to me. At the same time, that which you do without any ostentatious motive, one is almost afraid to applaud, lest one might seem to treat the act as done to attract applause. One thing, however, I must beg you to receive as a plain unquestionable verity—that there is no man upon earth whom I love more cordially than yourself. By this honourable pledge you hold me for ever engaged. But I cannot but think that you shew an excess of diffidence and reserve when you complain of my betraying your authorship; for it is easier to close the mouth upon live coals, than to keep the secret, when we know, and others do not, the author of a luminous work. Indeed it seems to me that, when an author has launched his performance, he has given up all right of concealment; having published his work, he ought to consider himself as personally before the public, and his composition as a thing quite open and free. Do you fear the venom of some envious reader?—the bite of some merciless tooth? Your singular felicity it is, that, as favour has not given you your celebrity, so envy cannot rob you of it. Your merit is too well established to depend upon the censorious or candid judgment of your readers. Henceforth, then, discard all groundless fears; and give free exercise to your pen, that you may be often before the public. Suppose you put forth some didactic or hortatory poem in my name. Put my silence to the test in this way, though I don't know whether I could answer for my keeping the secret even then; however, I might be interested in doing so; for I well know what pleasure there must be in being the means of bringing out anything which your mind had deliberately composed and approved. One has a sort of partnership in the praise of another man, when one is the first to present to the public the products of his intellect. It is thus that dramatic writers acquire their greatest glory; and such actors as Roscius and Ambivius,<sup>50</sup> in doing justice to the

<sup>50</sup> The name of Roscius is familiar to all. Ambivius Turpio was a celebrated comic actor, mentioned in Cic. de Senectute, and in the dialogue de Oratoribus, sect. 20.

sentiments of others, have advanced their own reputation. Do, therefore, I pray, in this manner employ your leisure in satisfying my cravings for fresh productions of your pen. And if, still afraid of appearing boastful, you are in dread of your authorship's transpiring through some talkative tongues, pray persist in your concealment for my benefit, that I may safely enjoy the credit of your writings. Farewell.

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A letter of Theodosius the emperor to the same Ausonius is expressed with much grace and dignity.

THEODOSIUS AUG. AUSONIO PARENTI.

THE affection with which I regard you, my much cherished parent,<sup>51</sup> conspires with my admiration of your talents and erudition, which are of the very highest order, to make me lay aside the usual reserve of other princes, and to send you a friendly epistle, written with my own hand. The object of which letter is to demand, not, indeed, as of royal right, but on the strength of our mutual attachment, not to let me be robbed of the gratification of reading your writings; some of which were well known to me, but have now almost escaped from my memory by lapse of time. I am anxious not only to recal such to my mind, but I wish to be made acquainted with what you have since written, and of which so much is proclaimed by the voice of fame. I beg, then, for the love in which you hold me, that you will freely communicate to me the contents of your cabinet, following the example of the best writers, (with whom most assuredly you deserve to be classed,) who contended with each other in their forwardness to lay their works before Octavianus Augustus,—works, it must be owned, not always contributing in their tendency to the honour of that emperor, who, whether he admired them as

<sup>51</sup> The appellations of father and son were usually interchanged between preceptors and those who were instructed by them.



much as I do you, I do not know, but certainly he did not love them better.

A letter or two of Ausonius to Pontius Paulinus, first his pupil, and afterwards bishop of Nola, celebrated for his taste and accomplishments, but more especially signalized by the retirement from the world, and devotional studies in which he passed the evening of his life, cannot fail to be interesting.

#### AUSONIUS TO PONTIUS PAULINUS.

How profitable to me, my son Paulinus, has been the complaint which you have made *for* me, for certainly it never would have been made *by* me. Fearing that the oil which you were so good as to send me had not satisfied me, you have supplied this assumed defect by doubling your present. Which comes now with the additional condiment of the Barcelona pickle. By the by, you know I never would or could consent to call this by the name of *muria*, the term in vulgar use; as the most scientific of the ancients, and those among them who have been scrupulous of using Greek terms, have adopted the word *garum*, without finding for it any Latin word. But there is one name for the liquor, which will, as between us, be appropriate, in whatever language I converse with you, and that is the liquor *sociorum*.<sup>52</sup> How kind and friendly it was in you thus to make me a partaker with you of those delicacies which appear to have but just come to your

<sup>52</sup> The *muria* was made from the fish called the thunny, salted, and matted, or dissolved; and the *garum*, which was held in superior estimation, was made in a similar manner from the scomber, or mackerel; though some say it was from the sturgeon. The *garum* was a Greek word. An inferior or common sort was made from any kind of small fish; and was called *alec*. The *garum* was generally sent to Rome by one or other of its allies, and thence called *garum sociorum*, the best being furnished by Spain; where it seems afterwards to have been the same as that which was called *anchovis*. *Garum de succis piscis Iberi*. Horat. Sat. viii. lib. 2. And see Mart. lib. xii. 102, 103. Edit. Schrev. in Not.

hands. O, my friend, thou art more to my taste than the sweetest condiment: the best favour you can bestow upon me is your own society, which deserves to be cherished by all that know you with a paternal embrace. Some may think such courtesies as these are the marks of a liberal mind, and sometimes they may be so, though perhaps not often. But that which your pen imparts, by the erudition of your epistles, by the sprightliness of your poetry, by the vigour of your invention, and by your power of amplification, I affirm to be out of the reach, while it merits every effort of imitation. As to the little work you have sent me, I will do what you desire. I will do my very best towards giving the whole a still higher polish; and although, in your hands, it has been brought to its perfection, I will still try to bestow upon it a superfluity of lustre, out of deference to your wishes rather than with the hope of improving what is already perfect. In the meantime, that your letter carrier (*tabellarius*) may not return without a little poetical corollary, I have amused myself with writing a few playful iambs, while I am entering upon the composition in heroic measure, which you desire me to undertake. The lines I now send you were, I solemnly assure you, produced at one sitting; a haste of which the poem itself bears sufficient marks, yet it has had no attention bestowed on it since its first coming from my pen.

SAME TO SAME.

MULTIPLIED occasions of thankfulness to you, my son Paclinus, produced by circumstances, but more perhaps by your goodnature and indulgence, have the effect, I am ashamed to confess, rather of encouraging than checking my audacity; as you will perceive in the application I am about to make to you in behalf of Philo, formerly my agent; who having deposited some merchandize, collected by purchase from various countries, with Hebromagus, using the accommodation which had been granted him by some of your people, is on a sudden threatened with expulsion. But unless you shall

indulge him with a longer stay at this place for his convenience, and the grain he has purchased can be conveyed in a pinnace, or some vessel, quite to the town, so that the Lucanians may be relieved from the want they are in, all the family of this man of letters will have less in future to do with the *oratio frumentaria* of Tully than the shifts of the *Circulio* of Plautus. The more easily to prevail with you to grant my request, or to frighten you by the dread of molestation if you refuse it, I have sent a letter to you in iambics, composed by myself, and authenticated by my seal, lest if my letter should come to you without being so accredited, you might suspect the carrier to be a person suborned to practise an imposition upon you. Farewell.

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Pontius Moropius Paulinus was in all respects a man of lively and amiable character, bound to Ausonius, his senior in age, by the most friendly ties, to whom he delights to acknowledge his obligations in the conduct of his early studies. They were equally devoted to the cultivation of general literature, and more especially to the graces of poetical composition, being in the constant habit of corresponding in verse, and submitting to each other their respective performances. Ausonius was a man of pleasure, and of the world; he passed his vigorous years in the courts of Gratian and Theodosius, in a gay and ambitious course, half heathen and half Christian, and retired, in his old age, to literary ease and privacy, in his native city, Bourdeaux.

Paulinus, who was also born at Bourdeaux, sought preferment at Rome, and rose so rapidly in his political career, that, while young, he was promoted to the consular rank. In middle life, he became so deeply impressed with the truths of Christianity, that he determined to enter the church. He was accordingly baptized, and was ordained a presbyter, in which capacity he was greatly distinguished by his piety, charity, and self-denial. He was afterwards consecrated bishop of Nola in Campania. His secession from Rome and

secular employments occasioned his separation from his old friend and instructor, Ausonius, who seems to have considered the loss of his society and correspondence as a heavy misfortune, which he makes the subject of bitter complaint in his poems and letters. As far as we can judge, from some parting epistles of Paulinus, he was as much affected as his friend by the necessity of the separation, while he submitted to it as the necessary result of his conversion. He died A. D. 431, aged seventy-eight. The talents of Pontius Paulinus were held in the highest esteem by Ausonius, who addresses him, during the glowing period of their intellectual commerce and mutual admiration, in the following letter, which is inserted the better to mark the transition in the character of Paulinus.

AUSONIUS TO PAULINUS.

I DARE say you do not see what I mean by so many verses. In truth, neither do I myself very well know, though I suspect, my own meaning. It was on the night next preceding the 19th cal. of January when your letter was brought to me; full of taste and scholarship. To this you have appended that most delightful production of your muse, in which you have compressed the history of the kings of Rome, written in three books by Suetonius,<sup>33</sup> into an epitome, with such elegance, that you alone seem to have attained to that excellence which it is hardly allotted to man to reach—brevity without obscurity. How skilfully, how aptly, how correctly, and how harmoniously have you blended these opposites. What I particularly admire in you is the fidelity with which you have observed the rules of the true Roman accentuation of syllables, taking care to preserve the marks which regulated the enunciation of the genuine and primitive language.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> These books of Suetonius, and Paulinus's epitome are lost.

<sup>34</sup> Some of the Roman scholars were very tenacious of the antiquity of their language, refusing to acknowledge its derivation from the Greek. This was especially the opinion of Varro, the great Roman antiquary and etymologist. See Cic. Acad. quest. lib. i. 3. But there are proofs enough of its Greek

But what shall I say of your eloquence? I will risk the positive assertion, that not one of the Roman youth can rank with you in the graces of poetical expression. This certainly so appears to me. If I say too much, bear with me, considering I speak as a father of his son;<sup>55</sup> and do not ask for a rigid judgment, where the dictates of affection would be more in place. But be assured that, though I am under the influence of warm affection, it does not prevent me from judging impartially and scrupulously. Oblige me, I beg, frequently with this sort of present, with which I am both delighted and honoured. You are encouraged to proceed by the flattering voice of the public; unless you will persist in calling that rashness which is only the vigour and promptitude of conscious merit; but I, forsooth, am to be called considerate, worthy of the utmost filial homage, a model of sound prudence; while in sober verity, the reverse of all this is the truth; for you know how to reach the summit without danger of falling. My vacillating age thinks it enough if it can make shift to keep its ground. I have dispatched this letter, the first thing this morning, to comply with the urgent haste of the postman. If more leisure had been allowed me,

origin. A further infusion of the Greek was introduced into the Roman language by the Dorians, who fixed themselves in the south-eastern part of Italy, and whose dialect was little different from that of the Æolians. See Dionys. Hal. Antiq. Rom. l. i. throughout.

That the Latin tongue admitted less variety of tone than the Greek is conceded on all hands. The acute had three places in the Greek—the ultimate, penultimate, and ante-penultimate: whereas the Latin admitted only two syllables to have the acute accent—the penultimate and ante-penultimate. Thus Scaliger, Caus. Ling. Lat. c. 58, "Latini suis libris omnes testati sunt nullam apud nos supremam syllabam acui." The Roman language is allowed to have been inflexibly barytone, as was the Æolic Greek, from which it descended. Athenæus says, the Romans follow the Æolians even in the tone of the voice. Ῥωμαῖοι πάντα τοὺς Αἰολικοὺς μιμουμένοι, ὡς καὶ κατὰ τοὺς τόνους τῆς φωνῆς Lib. x. c. 6. Though the Romans did very seldom use accentual marks, yet it appears from Quintilian, and many other authorities, that accentuation was considered by the Romans to be no less essential to the just pronunciation of their language than quantity.

<sup>55</sup> Ausonius and Paulinus address each other as father and son.



I should have been delighted to let my pen run at random, for my own gratification, and to elicit more from you.

Thus intimately connected and associated in the early period of their lives, the thoughts and interests of Ausonius and Paulinus took a very different direction in their maturer age. Ausonius first dissuaded, and then lamented in vain the determination of his more virtuous friend to devote himself to the duties and exercises of a real Christian. The slow returns of a correspondence which used to be so unremitting and lively, accompanied often with sallies of poetical invention, became at last a very desponding theme with Ausonius. He begs his friend and pupil, rather than discontinue the correspondence from an apprehension of the censures of his new friends, to adopt some of those contrivances by which a communication might be secretly carried on; and alludes to the Lacedemonian Scytale, and such like stratagems.<sup>66</sup>

The apology of Paulinus is full of sensibility and pious resolution.

PAULINUS TO AUSONIUS.

WHY, my father, do you recommend me to resume my intercourse with the Muses, to whom I have bid farewell? The access to a bosom devoted to Christ is closed against Apollo and the Muses. Time was when, united in our studies, with

<sup>66</sup> ————— ut tibi nullus  
Sit metus: et morem inissa, acceptaque salutis  
Audacter retine. Vel si tibi proditor instat,  
Aut quæstitoris gravior censura timetur,  
Occurre ingenio, quo sæpe occulta teguntur.

• • • • •  
Lacte incide notas: arescens charta tenebit  
Semper inaspiciens; prodentur scripta favillis.  
Vel Lacedæmoniæ Scytalæ imitare, libelli  
Sæmina Pergamæ tereti circumdata ligno  
Perpetuo inscribens versu; qui deinde solutus  
Non respondentes sparso dabit ordine formas.

equal strength, indeed, but equal zeal, we strove together to raise the God from his cave at Delphos, and to invoke the Muses of Song. We have prayed for the poets' inspiration on the tops of mountains, or in the silent groves; but my soul now feels the force of a very different influence—the influence of a new conviction. A far greater Divinity has induced a change upon my sentiments and habits; claiming to himself what, in truth, he alone enables me to give—the energies being to the Great Author of it. He commands us not to waste our time in ease, or in the vain pursuits of letters, or in worldly business, that we may have leisure to follow the guidance of his light, and practise obedience to his laws, to shun the craft of the sophist, the art of the rhetorician, and the figments of the poet, only tend to obscure. They only fill our tongues, and fill our minds with vain conceits, as tending to enlighten the understanding as to save the soul; for of what can they become possessed that is either good or true, who neglect the only source of what is both good and true,—that God whom none can see but in Christ. He is the light of truth, the way of life, the strength, the mind, the Father, the flower of the Father; begotten of God, Maker of the world, the life-giver and death-destroyer to mortal men; the great Teacher, God *with* us, and man *for* us; clothed in our nature, and emptied of his own; by an eternal communion between God and man, uniting both in himself. He,

Donec consimilis ligni replicetur in orbem.  
 Innumeras possim celandi ostendere formas,  
 Et clandestinas veterum reserare loquelas,  
 Si prodi Pauline times, nostraque vereres  
 Crimen amicitiae. Tanaquil\* tua nesciat istud.  
 Tu contemne alios; nec dedignare parentem  
 Adfari verbis. Ego sum tuus altor, et ille  
 Praeceptor primus, primus largitor honorum  
 Primus in Aonidum qui te collegia duxi.

Wife of Tarquinius Priscus, to whose ascendancy he is recorded to have attained his great fortune. Juvenal gives this name to all wives ruling their husbands.

therefore, as a ray from heaven shining within us, purifies our corrupt humanity, renews the habit of our minds; gives us, in exchange for our former pleasures, the full recompense of chaste and pure enjoyment; and for this he claims, as his prerogative, the jurisdiction of our hearts, our tongues, and our opportunities. He has the sovereign right to be dwelt upon in our thoughts,—to be studied, trusted, read, loved, and feared by his creatures. Those vain tumults which are stirred in the bosom by the cares of this life, vanish before the confident expectation of the future life with God. Because I withdraw myself from worldly cares to be at leisure for God; because He is the object of my study; because I surrender myself to him, and trust to him for all things; do not on that account call me indolent, or perverse, or guilty of neglect of duty. A Christian there cannot be without practical piety; nor has piety anything but a name without Christianity. I may lay hold on Christ; I cannot display him before you: but it is to him that God has chosen that I should be indebted for all sacred privileges, and whatever can be named most precious. To you, by whom I was brought forward, favoured, and guided in my worldly course, I must avow myself indebted for discipline, preferment, letters, language, office, reputation;—to you, my patron, preceptor, and father. But, you ask, why should I live at so great a distance from you? and you are angry with my retirement. To this I answer, the step is either convenient, or necessary, or agreeable to me. On whichever of these accounts it has been taken, surely it is a pardonable step. Forgive one who loves you, if he adopts what seems expedient to him. Congratulate him if he has chosen the life most in accordance with his taste and disposition.

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In a subsequent epistle, he takes a metrical leave of Ausonius with this consolatory assurance:

*"Nunquam animo divisus agam; prius ipsa recedet  
Corpore vita meo, quam vester pectore vultus."*

After his separation from Ausonius, the friendship and correspondence of Paulinus was withdrawn from the men of letters in Rome, and transferred to the dignitaries and luminaries of the Christian Church in the West, among whom Augustin and Jerom were the principal. His letters to Augustin are often full of spirit and elegance, though sometimes defective in the style and taste of their compliments. The habit of mutual adulation infected all the correspondence of that æra. Though the letters of Augustin have an unction of spiritual sensibility, and a vivacity of feeling and affection which impart to them great interest, sometimes reaching an elevation of true sublimity, and often very happy in expression and illustration, they are nevertheless frequently inelegant and ungraceful in phraseology, and crowded with conflicting metaphors. We will produce a specimen or two of the correspondence between these two distinguished fathers. And first, from Paulinus and Therasia <sup>57</sup> his wife, to whom Ausonius alludes, as we have seen, under the soubriquet of Tanaquil, but who appears to have been the virtuous companion of an estimable husband.

DOMINO FRATRI UNANIMO, ET VENERABILI AUGUSTINO,  
PAULINUS ET THERASIA, PECCATORES.<sup>58</sup>

THE love of Christ, which, though absent from each other in the body, unites us in the bond of a common faith, gives me a certain confidence in writing to you, which puts me above the natural influence of a timid disposition; while your letters bring you with a sort of intimacy into the recesses of my bosom. These letters, abounding in erudition, and borrowing their sweetness from heaven, as the medicine and nourishment of my soul, we have the temporary possession of, in five books; with which we are favoured by the blessed and venerable bishop Alipius, not for our instruction only, but for the benefit of a church, which includes many cities within its sacred su-

<sup>57</sup> A proof that celibacy was not at this time very strictly enforced.

<sup>58</sup> The peculiar style of the address appears best in the original.

pervision. These books I treasure up for my constant perusal; they are my delight; from them I draw constant nourishment; not the food which perishes, but that which imparts the substance of eternal life, through the faith which unites us to the mystical body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith confirmed by precept and example; and, overlooking visible things, turns with longing towards those that are invisible, through that love which believeth all things according to the truth as it exists in God himself. O thou true Salt of the earth, by which our hearts are so seasoned as to resist the corruption of the world! O Lamp, worthy to be placed on the Candelabrum of the Temple, which, spreading abroad among Christians the light fed with the oil of gladness, dissipates the darkness of the heretics, dense as it is, and brings out truth from the shades which obscure it, into the purest light and splendour.

You perceive, therefore, my beloved brother, how well I understand and know you; how greatly I admire you; and with what affection you are cherished by me, who daily thus converse with you through your letters, and feast upon your words. Well may your mouth be called the conduit of a living stream; supplied by Him who is that Well of Water which springeth up unto everlasting life; for which my arid soul has been long athirst, and thirsting turned to thee. My barren earth longs to be made fruitful by your overflowing abundance. And since you have sufficiently armed me against the Manichæans by your five books, if you have prepared defences against any other of the enemies of the Catholic faith, (for our great adversary, who has a thousand devices for accomplishing his purposes of evil, must be met by a resistance as varied as his forms of attack,) I beseech you to supply me with weapons, and deny me not the arms suited to one enlisted in the cause of righteousness. I am a sinner labouring with the burthen of my transgressions; a veteran in trespasses, but as a soldier belonging to the Eternal King, only a raw recruit. I have been up to this time a miserable follower after the wisdom of man. The dedication of my time and



thoughts to learning and human prudence has made me insensible and dumb to my Creator. Having long lived among my enemies, and become vain in my imaginations, I have at last lifted up my eyes to the hills, inhaling the precepts of the law and the gifts of grace, from whence help has come to me from the Lord, who, not rewarding men according to their iniquity, hath given sight to the blind, and freedom to the captive; hath put down the lofty, and exalted the humble and meek.

I trust I am treading in the footsteps of the just, though with very inferior speed; hoping, through your prayers, to be enabled to lay hold on the mercies of God. Guide, therefore, one who creeps upon the ground, and teach him to proceed in your own track. I wish you not to compute my age by reckoning from my natural, but from my spiritual birth: for my age, according to the flesh, is just that of the cripple cured by the Apostle before the beautiful gate of the temple; but if you count my years from the birth of the soul, my age is that of those infants who by their deaths typified the sacrifice of the Lamb, and auspicated their Lord's passion. And, therefore, as an infant in the word of God, as a babe in spiritual age, educate me by the nurture of your instruction, while I am drawing nutriment from the abundance of your faith, wisdom, and charity. In respect of our common office you are my brother; but if we look to the maturity of the powers of your mind, you are my father. Junior to me, it may be, in age, your prudence has crowned you with the honours of the hoary head. Comfort and strengthen, then, in the pursuit of sacred learning, and spiritual studies, one whose experience in these things is yet raw;—who, after many dangers and shipwrecks, am hardly emerging from the waves of this world. Do you, who have your firm stand upon the stable shore, receive me to your bosom, as into a port of safety; or, if you think me worthy so much honour, let us trust ourselves to the ocean together. In the mean time, as a plank hold me up while I am struggling with the perils of this life, and striving to escape from the gulf in which sinners are submerged. I have

been careful to dispossess myself of all incumbrances, that, freed from the habiliments of the flesh, and the care of the coming day, I may, by the help of Christ, swim from out of the gulf which separates between me and my God; and where my sins howl upon me with incessant fury. Nor do I boast to have performed this, for if I might glory, it would be in the Lord, who alone can fully accomplish what He teaches us to will. Though all that I have yet attained is an ardent desire to be made a lover of the goodness of God, which must depend upon the grace given me; yet, as far as in me lies, I have loved the beauty of the sanctuary, and had determined to seek a humble post in the house of my God; but He who was pleased to separate me from my mother's womb, and to draw me from carnal friendships to his grace and favour, hath thought fit, for no merit of my own, to lift me from the mire and pool of misery, to place me with the princes of the people, and to give me a part and lot in Christ, so that I might be on an equality with you in office and station, however below you in merit. Assuming, therefore, not by my own presumption, but by the good pleasure and appointment of God, fraternity with you, although ill deserving so great an honour, I am not disheartened, by the sense of my own unworthiness; because I am well assured, for I know you to be truly wise, that your relish is rather for the humble than the exalted things of this world: and on this ground, I trust, you will cordially accept the love which comes from so humble a source, and which, I presume, has now been conveyed to you by Alipius, that highly favoured minister of Christ, who deigns to be called my father. He has, doubtless, given you an example of loving us above our deserts, even before being acquainted with us; who, although we were separated by a long interval of land and sea, yet, in the spirit of true love, which penetrates and diffuses itself everywhere, in spite of all impediments, has been able to realize our presence by his affection and converse. It was in the abovementioned present of your books that he gave me the first proofs of his affection, and of your christian benevolence. With what pains

did he strive to make me duly sensible of your piety; not only using for that purpose his own persuasive words, but those specimens of your eloquence, and faith; endeavouring, at the same time, to increase your affection for me by his own example.

It is our wish, dear brother in Christ, worthy of all love and veneration, that the grace of God, as it now is, may be for ever with you. We send our affectionate greeting to all your house, and all your friends and associates, who emulate your virtues. The loaf which we have sent as a token of our love and affection, we beg you to bless by accepting.

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The letter of Paulinus to Alipius, a bishop of distinguished merit, and the particular friend of Augustin, is in a similar style of piety, humility, and affectionate feeling. He returns thanks for the books of Augustin against the Manicheans, which Alipius had procured for his perusal; makes enquiries respecting Alipius, with a view, it would appear, to give an account of him to the world; and communicates some particulars of his own history, probably with an expectation that the biography was to be reciprocal.

The letter is as follows.

DOMINO MERITO HONORABILI, ET BEATISSIMO PATRI,  
ALPIO, PAULINUS ET THERASIA PECCATORES.

IN your kind concern for us, you have exhibited an example of true and perfect benevolence and attachment; our truly venerable, greatly blessed, and much valued lord. We have received your letters by the hand of our messenger returning from Carthage, and find in them such luminous traces of your character, that we seem rather to recognize than to acknowledge your benevolence towards us. It is a benevolence flowing from Him, who, from the foundation of the world, predestined us to himself: in whom we were made before we were born; for He who made the future before it was, made us, and not

we ourselves. Formed by his prescience, counsel, and operation, we were united by an agreement and unity of will and faith, and by a secret love anticipating our personal knowledge of each other. We congratulate ourselves, therefore, and glory in the Lord, who being one and the same in all regions of the earth, makes that love which He pours out upon all flesh, especially operative in his chosen by the agency of his Holy Spirit; gladdening his own city with the streams of his particular mercy; among the citizens of which He has made you the chief, having given you an apostolic seat among the princes of his people as your just reward: and us also, whom He has raised from among the degraded and destitute of the earth, He has deigned to number in the same lot with yourself. But we more especially rejoice in that gift of the Lord, by which we have a place in your bosom: we rejoice that He has so wrought upon your affections in our behalf, that we can repose with confidence in your love towards us. Nor is it possible not to return this affection with equal ardour when we think of the many kindnesses and favours we have received from you. We have received, indeed, the most signal and most precious product of your affection for us, in those five books of our brother Augustin, that holy man, perfected in the faith of our Lord Christ; of which such is our admiration, that we cannot but regard them as dictated by the spirit of God. Therefore, doubting not of your acquiescence, and assuring ourselves that you will recommend us to his candour, making the due apology for our inexperience, we have ventured at once to write to him; and to the other holy men, with whom you hold converse, we trust you will recommend and excuse us in a similar manner, that we may have the benefit and support of their prayers and good offices; taking special care, as no doubt you will, to assure them, in return, of our devotion to the service, whether they be your officiating clergy, or the emulators, in the monasteries, of your faith and virtue. For although among the people, and over the people, you attend upon the sheep of the Lord's pasture, with an ever wakeful vigilance, yet by

your abdication of the world, and your rejection of all its carnal allurements, you make, as it were, a desert around yourself; separated from the many, and called among the few. I have executed your commission in procuring the general history of Eusebius, the venerable bishop of Constantinople, with a little more delay than you calculated upon, not having a copy of that work in my hands. I found it at Rome, in the possession of that most holy man Domnio, who, without doubt, was the more active in carrying my wishes into effect, because it furnished him with an opportunity of testifying his respect for you.

As you have now made us acquainted with the place of your residence, I have written, according to your desire, to the venerable partner of your labours, our respected Aurelius, to request, that if you should be still in the region of Hippo, he would obligingly send my letters to you there, together with a skin for transcribing the same in Carthage. And we have besought those holy men, with whose kindness and benevolence you have brought us acquainted, Comes and Enodius, to take charge of the said transcription, that our father Domnio may not be longer than is necessary kept without his own copy, while that which is sent to you may be retained by you for your own use. But this I specially request of you,—since you have honoured me with your favour and friendship so far beyond either my deserts or expectation, that in exchange for this general history now sent to you, you will furnish me with the entire history of yourself—your descent, your family, which you left at the call of the Lord, by what means, and in what manner your separation from her who bore you had its beginning; and how you passed, having abjured the source from which your carnal existence was derived, to the mother that rejoices in her spiritual progeny, and into a royal and sacerdotal family. What you were pleased to say you learned from me at Milan, when you were initiated there, I confess myself anxious to hear more in detail, that I may be made acquainted with all that concerns you. I shall rejoice if from our father Ambrose you



were invited to embrace the true faith, and consecrated to the priesthood, so that our conversion may have a common origin: for though I was baptized by Delphinus at Bourdeaux, and consecrated by Delphinus at Barcelona in Spain, yet was I nurtured in the faith by the love of Ambrose; and to him I must ascribe my efficiency, whatever it is, in the sacred office to which I am ordained. He chose so to claim me, that wheresoever I might thereafter be settled, I might be considered as his presbyter. But that you may be fully acquainted with all that concerns me, know that though a sinner of long standing, I was not long ago extricated from darkness and the shadow of death; and that not long ago I began to breathe the vital air; that but lately I put my hand to the plough; and but lately took up the cross; which, that I may sustain until the end of my life, let me be aided by your prayers. To have come to my relief, when oppressed by these burthens, will accumulate the rewards which await you. The saint who succours the sinner shall be exalted as a city on a hill. And you are, indeed, a city built upon a mountain, or rather a light burning on a candlestick of seven branches, while my lamp is under a bushel, obscured by my sins. Visit us with your letters, and bring us forth into the light in which you live, conspicuous on your candlestick of gold. Your instructions shall be a light to our paths, and our heads shall be anointed with the oil of your lamp; and may our faith be quickened when we shall have drank in from the spirit of your mouth that which gives sustenance to the understanding, and light to the soul. May the peace and grace of God be with you, and a crown of righteousness be reserved for you on that day, my much loved, much revered, and much wished for father and lord. We beg to salute, with all love and respect, those sanctified men who are about your person, and copy your virtue—your brothers, and ours, if they will deign to be so called, whether in the churches or monasteries at Carthage, Thagast, Hippo regius, and in all places in your vicinity, or elsewhere, within the bounds of your visitations, serving the Lord faithfully. If you have received the parch-

from the revered Domno, you will kindly remit to us in manuscript. I have sent you one loaf, as the symbol of unity, in which, however, the trinity is involved. This communion will be implied in your acceptance of this bread.

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Perhaps I have afforded the reader a sufficient glance into the character of Paulinus of Nola; enough to hold him forth, and, in truth, he was, one of the brightest patterns in the whole mass of ecclesiastical history. In addition to what has been said of the writings of this amiable person, the following passage from another of his letters will give the reader a portrait of him more expressive than that which he refused to his friend. Sulpicius Severus had desired to have Paulinus's picture drawn. The Bishop of Nola refused, and called his request an act of folly. The following passage of it was much admired by Augustin. (Ep. 86.) "How should I dare to give you my picture, who am altogether like the earthly man, and by my conduct represent the carnal person? On every side sin oppresses me. I am ashamed to have my picture drawn of me; and I dare not consent to have it made otherwise. I know what I am, and I would wish to be what I am not. What avails it me, wretched man, to have evil and love in me, since I am what I hate, and sloth hinders me from endeavouring to do what I love? I find myself at war with myself, and am torn with an intestine conflict. The flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The law of the body opposes the law of the Spirit. Woe is me, since I have not taken away the taste of the poison-tree by the use of the saving cross. The poison communicated to all from our first parent by his sin, yet abideth in me."

The letter from Augustin to Paulinus, written before they met together personally, is a fair specimen of his fervid manner of expressing himself. His style is verbose and inflated, and, while we peruse with admiration the elevation of

his matter and his manner, the taste of the period in which he lived forces itself upon our notice in every part of his writings.

TO MY TRULY RESPECTED AND VENERABLE BROTHER PAULINUS, WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE IN CHRIST, AUGUSTUS SENDS HEALTH IN THE LORD.

O THOU good man, and brother, long has the sight of you been denied to my soul, which hardly obeys me when I tell it to bear this privation patiently. Can it be said to bear it while my bosom is tormented with an internal longing after your society. If it is only when we endure bodily sufferings without perturbation of mind that we can properly be said to be patient; so the mind must bear its own ills with the same composure, to be entitled to be considered patient. But because I cannot patiently bear to be without seeing you, I cannot allow that to be called impatience: for as long as you are what you are, one ought hardly to bear patiently to be without you. I may be well excused for being unable to endure that which, if I could endure with equanimity, I should myself be hardly worthy to be endured.

However wonderful it may be thought, that which happens to me is not the less true—I grieve that I do not see you, and I take comfort from that grief; so displeased am I with the fortitude which can bear patiently the absence of the good. Patience is sometimes the fruit of impatience. Thus we desire earnestly the future Jerusalem; and the more impatiently we desire it, so much the more patiently we endure all things for its sake. Who can be insensible to the delight of your society, and who not sensibly feel the misfortune of being without it? Neither of these can I do; and since, if I could, I should be able to do violence to humanity, I am pleased to be without this power, and out of this self-satisfaction arises a certain consolation. It is not the grief of simple sorrow, but grief grounded on thought and reflection, which thus furnishes its own consolation. Do not, I pray you, reprove me, with that more holy gravity which belongs to you, and tell me of the

ally of lamenting the absence of one personally unknown to me, since you have in your correspondence unveiled to me the very recesses of your mind. For what if, at any time, I were told that a beloved brother and friend were dwelling in some city of this earth, should I not be reasonably distressed if I were not allowed to visit his abode? Why then may I not as reasonably lament that I have not yet seen your person,—the abode of a mind with which I have become so well acquainted as with my own. For I have read your letters, flowing with milk and honey; in which that simplicity of heart with which you seek the Lord, is the prominent character; full of the odour of his goodness, and bringing lustre and honour to his name. The brethren here have read them, and express an untired and unspeakable delight in contemplating those excellent gifts of God, with which you have been endowed. As many as have read them, seize upon them, and in their turn are seized with joy in the perusal of them. It is impossible to describe that sweet odour of Christ with which they are so fragrant.

For is it not the natural effect of these letters, when they bring your character before us, to excite in us a desire to seek you? The more perspicuous you are made, the more attractive you become. By making you mentally present to us, they render us less able to bear your personal absence. All learn from them to love you, and in proportion to this their love for you, is their desire to become the objects of your esteem and affection. Meanwhile they praise and bless God, that by his grace you are what you are. Christ is earnestly supplicated to calm the winds and waves while you are on your way to the haven of assurance and stability. In these letters we see the spouse urged by the husband to an imitation of his firmness and pious fortitude; and so united and coupled do you appear to be, by spiritual and chaste ties and bonds, and a reciprocation of duties, that in saluting you we seem to be saluting both. In these letters the cedars of Lebanon seem to be brought down from their heights, and made into the fabric of an ark, to float upon the waves of this stormy world. There the glory of this life is

despised, that the true glory may be acquired. There a world is relinquished, that a world may be obtained. There the vices of secular pride and delusion are, as the children of Babylon, dashed against the rocks.

These, and such like delightful contemplations, your letters are present to those who have the advantage of reading them. Letters they are, full of faith unfeigned, precious hope, and pure charity. What a thirst and craving they create in us to go with your spirit into the courts of the Lord! What can surpass that most holy love which they seem to breathe? or that ebullition of cordial feelings with which they overflow? What thanksgivings they pour forth to God! What gifts they bring down in return from Him! Shall we say that they are marked distinguished by meekness, or by fervour? by light or abundance? What is it in them that so melts us? that so inflames us? that rains so upon us, and yet from so serene a sky? What is it, I beseech you, that we can pay you as their worthy unless by being wholly yours in Him, whose only and whole you are? If this is not enough, I have no more to give. You have caused me to think this not a little to bestow, having condescended to honour me with so great praise in your letters, that when I bestow myself upon you, if I treat this present as a mean one, I must seem to doubt your veracity. Though ashamed of thinking so well of myself, I should be more ashamed to disbelieve you. I must, therefore, thus compromise the case. I will not believe that I am what you suppose, since of this I am not ascertained; but I will confidently believe I am loved by you, because this I plainly perceive and understand. Thus I shall be neither precipitate in my judgment of myself, nor ungrateful towards you. And when I offer myself entirely to you, it cannot be a small thing, because I offer that which is honoured by your attachment;—I offer, if not what you think me to be, still that which you pray that I may be in desert. Your prayers for me are better than your praises of me—better to wish and pray that much may be added to what I am, rather than think me to be what I am not.

Behold, in the man who brings you this letter, my dearest



friend—one with whom I have lived in the most cordial friendship from my earliest youth; whose acceptance with you will be ensured by the commendation of him who sends him to you. But I wish to caution you against giving credit to what he shall say in praise of me; for I have found him to be a man too subject to be deceived by his propensity to measure others by his affection, rather than their true deserts; and especially, to deem me to have already received those gifts, to receive which at the Lord's hands I should, indeed, open wide the entrance to my inmost bosom. And if he thus expresses himself concerning me when we are together, who does not see what praises he will be likely to pour upon me when absent?—praises more flattering than true.

He will transcribe for your use the books I have composed; for I do not know that I have written anything for the ears either of those who are without, or those within the church, of which he is not possessed. But when you read them, my venerable friend, let not those things which the truth speaks through my infirmity so captivate you, that those which originate with myself may be accepted by you without diligent examination; much less let the pleasure you find in dwelling upon the good and right things imparted to me, of which I am the mere dispenser, make you forget how much I need your prayers for the numerous errors I commit. In these performances, if you find, as you must needs do, what deserves your censure, there I myself am conspicuous; but where, by that gift of discernment which you have received of God, you find anything with which you are rightly pleased, let Him have your gratitude and praise for it, who is the fountain of life, and in whose light we shall see light, when we shall see him face to face, and not as now in ænigma.<sup>57</sup> What has been the product of my brain under the influence of the old fermentation, comes under a severe self-examination; but what,

<sup>57</sup> Βλέπομεν γὰρ ἀπὸ δι' ὁρατοῦ ἐν αἰνίγματι. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. We see as through a glass reflecting the images of divine things in an enigmatical manner. Invisible things being represented by visible, immaterial by corporal, eternal by temporal.

by the gift of God, my mind has produced when nourished by the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, I rejoice in with trembling. For what have we which we have not received? That his is the better lot who is rich in the greater and more numerous gifts of God, than his who possesses the fewer and smaller of the same gifts, who can deny? but again, his case is better who is full of gratitude to God for a small gift, than his who, having much to be thankful for, takes to himself the merit. Pray for me, my brother, that these may be always my simple confessions, and that my heart may not be at variance with my tongue. Pray for me, I beseech you, that reluctant to be praised myself, I may delight in praising and invoking God, and that I may be safe from my enemies.

There is another reason for your loving the brother who brings you this. He is the kinsman of the venerable and truly blessed bishop Alipius, whom you embrace with all your heart, and deservedly; for whosoever entertains proper thoughts of that excellent man, must think as he ought to do of the mercies and gifts of God. When, therefore, he read your petition, requesting him to write for you the particulars of his life, his kind feeling towards you prompted a complacency, while his modesty suggested a denial; whom when I saw thus fluctuating between affection and humility, I transferred the burthen from his shoulders to my own; for in truth this is what in a letter he desired me to do. Speedily, therefore, if the Lord permit, I will bring all Alipius home to your bosom. What I am principally apprehensive of is, that he will be afraid to disclose everything which the Lord has conferred upon him, lest to the less intelligent (for it is not you only that will read these particulars) he may seem to hold forth *himself* to admiration, rather than the Divine gifts to man; and thus you, who know how to read and construe these things, may, by this caution used by him in guarding against the infirmity of ordinary readers, be robbed of a part of your claim to a full acquaintance with the history of your brother. This task I should actually have accomplished and sent for your perusal, but that the brother who is my messenger upon

this occasion, found it expedient to set out on his journey sooner than was expected. Him I now commend to your heart and your tongue, in the hope that you will admit him to a companionship with you, on the footing of an acquaintance not now commenced, but co-eval with our own friendship. If he shall without reserve place his mind clearly before you, I trust he will in great part, if not altogether, be restored to a sound state by your conversation. I could wish him to be almost stunned by the numerous voices of those who love their friends, not after the pattern of the world. His son, whom I regard as my own, and whose name you will find in some of my books, although he will not now have an opportunity of presenting himself to you, I had resolved by letter to have delivered into your hands, to be by you consoled, exhorted, instructed, not so much by hearing you, as by borrowing strength from your example. From the verses he has composed, and from the epistle which I sent to him, your kind and feeling discernment will have perceived what are my regrets, and fears, and wishes concerning him. Nor am I without hope that, through the grace of God, by your instrumentality I shall be relieved of these agitating cares on this subject.

Now, since you are about to peruse my many productions, your love will be rendered a source of greater pleasure to me, if what you shall find reprehensible in them you will, tempering your partiality with a due regard to justice, correct and confute. For certainly you are not one of those with whose oil I need fear my head to be anointed.

The fraternity here, not only those who dwell with us, but who live in other places, serving God as we do, but especially all who know us and have fellowship with us in Christ, send their salutation and homage; while they desire earnestly to be admitted into brotherhood with you, and to witness the happiness you have in yourself and communicate to others. I dare not ask it, but if your ecclesiastical duties allow you any rest, come and see what are the sentiments which I feel towards you in common with Africa.

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The character of St. Augustin is best gathered from his epistles, into which he pours the full flood of his feelings, and which bear most interesting testimony to his piety, sincerity, and humanity. They display also great richness of research, and reasoning powers of the highest class. Gibbon hastily pronounces him to be superficial, from his candid avowal in his confessions that he read the Platonists in a Latin version. He probably was not well enough acquainted with the Greek, to read, without trouble, the philosophy conveyed through that medium; but the assumption of some critics, that he was so ignorant of the Greek language as to be disqualified for the task of expounding Scripture, has no warrant from his own confessions, or from the character and extent of his learned labours. It is very improbable that one who performed the office of a public teacher of rhetoric, with the highest success and celebrity, at Carthage, Rome, and Milan, should be ignorant of any branch of human learning, though less distinguished in some than others. That he neglected the study of Greek in his early youth, is his own confession (*Confess. i. 14*), but his deep acquaintance with the Scriptures, implies such a direction of his studies, as must have repaired the deficiencies of a period in which his temper, caprice, and desultory habits were under no salutary control.

Gibbon gives the following summary of his character. "The military labours, and anxious reflexions of Count Boniface, were alleviated by the edifying conversation of his friend St. Augustin, till that bishop, the light and pillar of the catholic church, was gently released, in the third month of the siege (of Hippo Regius<sup>50</sup>), in the seventy-sixth year of his age (A. D. 436), from the impending calamities of his country. The youth of Augustin had been stained by the vices and errors, which he so ingenuously confesses: but from the moment of his conversion, to that of his death, the manners of the bishop of Hippo were pure and austere: and the most conspicuous of his virtues was an ardent zeal against heretics

<sup>50</sup> By Genseric.

of every denomination, the Manicheans, the Donatists, and the Pelagians, against whom he waged a perpetual controversy. When his city, some months after his death, was burnt by the Vandals, the library was fortunately saved, which contained his voluminous writings. According to the judgment of the most impartial critics, the superficial learning of Augustin was confined to the Latin language, and his style, though sometimes animated by the eloquence of passion, is usually clouded by false and affected rhetoric. But he possessed a strong, capacious, argumentative mind; he boldly sounded the dark abyss of grace, predestination, free will, and original sin; and the rigid system of Christianity which he framed and restored, has been entertained with public applause, and secret reluctance by the Latin church."

The historian to whom the above passage belongs, speaks of the superficial learning of St. Augustin; but it will appear to such as are intelligent upon the awful topics on which the pen of that great father was employed, that he touched nothing with which his mind had not become deeply conversant. Gibbon was not only very superficial himself on these subjects, but so little acquainted with the learning of St. Augustin as to be but ill qualified to appreciate his merit. He avows his 'personal acquaintance' with the bishop of Hippo not to have extended beyond his *Confessions*, and the *City of God*; and how far it extended beyond the porch of that sanctuary where the great man of whom he treats dedicated his heart-offerings to his Maker, and how far beyond the entrance gate of the city peopled with his pious and magnificent thoughts, we are at liberty to conjecture.

The two letters of St. Augustin to Valentinus, as they are not long, and are among his best in point of expression, while they explain his views on the conflicting propositions of sovereign grace and free will, shall be produced.



TO VALENTINUS, MY MUCH LOVED AND HONOURED LORD,  
AND BROTHER IN CHRIST, AND TO THE BROTHERS WHO  
ARE WITH HIM, AUGUSTIN SENDS HEALTH IN THE LORD.

WE have been visited by two young men, Cresconius and Felix, announcing themselves as belonging to your congregation, who reported to us that your monastery was agitated with a disagreement of opinion which provoked much dissension : some entertaining such exalted views of grace as wholly to deny to man the possession of free will ; and, what is of worse consequence, that, in the day of final judgment, God will not render to every one according to his works. They reported also, that many of you held another opinion ; maintaining that the will is assisted by the grace of God, and thereby disposed towards what is right in thought and act, and that when the Lord shall come to render to every one according to his works, He will pronounce those works only to be good, which God has fore-ordained that we should walk in them. And this I consider to be the right opinion. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, as the Apostle besought the Corinthians, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you. First, let it be observed, that our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is written in the Gospel of the Apostle John, did not come to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. But afterwards, as writes the Apostle Paul, God shall judge the world when He shall come, as the church confesses in its Creed—to judge the quick and the dead. If, therefore, there is no grace of God, how does He save the world ? If there is no free will, how does He judge the world ? Accordingly, the book or epistle which the persons abovementioned brought to you, I wish you to understand agreeably to this belief,—that you neither deny the grace of God, nor so maintain the doctrine of free will, as separating it from the grace of God, as though without it we were able to think or do any thing well pleasing to God ; for this is impossible. It is for

this reason that our Lord, when he speaks of the fruit of righteousness, says to his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." On which subject I would have you to understand the letter above alluded to was written to Sixtus, a presbyter of the church at Rome: and was intended against the new Pelagian heretics, who say that the grace of God is bestowed according to the amount of merit in the person receiving it; which teaches, in effect, that he who glories, may glory, not in the Lord, but in himself; in direct opposition to what the Apostle enjoins—"Let none glory in man; but let him who glories glory in the Lord." But these heretics, considering themselves to be justified by themselves, and not regarding justification as the free gift of God, glory not in the Lord, but in themselves. To such the Apostle says, "Who made thee to differ?" by which was implied that none but God himself, distinguished any from the common mass of ruin derived from Adam. But since a carnal man, and one vainly puffed up, to the question, "Who made thee to differ?" might think or say, my faith, or my prayers, or my righteousness, hath made me to differ, the Apostle presently meets these imaginations, by saying, "What have you which you have not received?" But if you have received, why do you boast as not having received? Those do glory as not having received, who presume they are justified by themselves; and thus they glory in themselves, not in the Lord. For this reason, in the epistle which I sent to you, I proved by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, that neither good works, nor devout prayers, nor holy faith, could ever have been found in us, unless we had received them from Him, concerning whom the Apostle James says, "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Nor let any one say, that for the merits of his own works, or for the merits of his prayers, or for the merits of his faith, the grace of God was given to him; nor let that be believed which the heretics affirm, that the grace of God is given to us according to our deservings; which is altogether a most false and unfounded opinion: not because there is nothing meritorious or good belonging to the

pious, and no evil in the impious ; for if it were so, how will God judge the world ? but merits of our own are not the ground of our salvation, which is the gift of God in Christ Jesus, and the pure result of his converting grace, of which good works are the fruit and the testimony. Of this grace and mercy the Psalmist thus speaks—" My God, let thy mercy go before me, that the unrighteous may be justified ;" that is, from being unrighteous be made righteous, and made to possess an inceptive sort of merit which the Lord will crown when he comes to judge the world. There are many things which I was desirous of discussing in a letter to you, by the perusal of which you might be brought more fully acquainted with what has been resolved in the councils of the bishops against those same heretical Pelagians, but the brothers who came to us from you were in haste to return, by whom we have written to you, though not in answer to any letters received from you : for none were brought by those who came from you ; nevertheless, we gave them welcome, as the simplicity of their carriage and behaviour satisfied us that they were practising no deceit. The reason alleged for their haste was their wish to pass the Easter with you, hoping that so sacred a season, with the blessing of the Lord, might find you not in dissension but in peace. I think you will be acting wisely, and very much indeed to my satisfaction, if you will be persuaded to send to me, the person who, according to their statement, has been the promoter of this disturbance. For he either does not understand my book ; or, possibly, he himself may not be understood, when he endeavours to solve and disentangle a question difficult in itself, and intelligible to few : for it was this very question concerning the grace of God which occasioned men, wanting discernment, to understand the precept of the Apostle to be, " Let us do evil, that good may come." Whereof the Apostle Peter speaks thus, in his second Epistle, " Wherefore, my beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless ; and account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation : even as our beloved

brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of those things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Listen cautiously, therefore, to the admonitions of the Apostle; and where you find the subject too hard for you, put full confidence, in the mean time, until a fuller understanding of these subjects shall be vouchsafed to you, in the words of inspiration, from which you learn that the will of man is free, as is also the grace of God, without whose help the will can neither be turned towards God, nor advance in His favour. What you piously believe, pray that you may wisely comprehend. The use of our understandings is the proper act of our free will. For unless the free will were engaged in the exercise of the understanding, the Scripture would not have spoken to us thus, "Understand ye brutish among the people, and ye fools, when will ye be wise?" We see, therefore, that by Him who commands us to understand and be wise, our obedience is required, which obedience could not be yielded without the exercise of the free will: and on the other hand, if this could be done without the help of Divine grace, so that we could understand and become wise purely by an act of the will, God would not have been thus addressed in the book of inspiration, "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law." Nor would it have been written in the Gospel, "Then opened he their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures." Nor would the Apostle James have said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Mighty is the Lord, who can grant both to you and to us, that we may rejoice in the speedy intelligence of the return of your peace and pious unanimity. I greet you not only in my own name, but in the name of the brothers who are with me, and I beg your united and fervent prayers for us. May the Lord be with you.

## AUGUSTIN TO VALENTIN.

To my beloved and honoured brother in Christ, Valentin, and the brothers who are with him, Augustin sends health in the Lord.

You know that Cresconius Felix, and another of that name, who have come to us from your congregation, have passed the Easter with us ; whom we detained somewhat longer, that they might return to you better furnished for their conflict with those Pelagian heretics, into whose error *he* falls who thinks that the grace of God is given in recompence of any human merit, which is only bestowed upon man through and for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. But again, he who thinks that when the Lord shall come to judge the world, man shall not be judged according to his works, who through his life in this world was capable of using the free determination of his will, is nevertheless in error. For only those little ones, who are yet incapable of any works, either good or bad, shall be condemned on the sole account of original sin,<sup>50</sup> to whom, by the washing of regeneration, the grace of the Saviour hath not brought redemption. But all others who have come to the use of their free will, and have added their own proper transgressions to the original sin, if they have not been rescued from the power of darkness, nor transferred to the kingdom of Christ, shall not only suffer for the guilt of the original offence, but for the transgressions of their own voluntary commission. The good also shall not reap the reward of their own voluntary acts, but they have the happiness of knowing that they owe the direction of their wills to the grace of God ; and thus the Scripture is fulfilled which says, " Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile ; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile." Concerning which very difficult question, that is, as to will and grace, I have no need in this

<sup>50</sup> See this austere tenet considered in a subsequent note



epistle to enter into any discussion, since I had already given another to them as about soon to return. I have written also to you a treatise, which if, with the Lord helping you, you will read attentively, and with spiritual intelligence, there will not in future be any dissensions among you on this subject. The persons abovementioned carry with them other instructions, which we have judged it important to furnish for your guidance, from which you will learn how the catholic church, by the mercy of God, has repelled the poison of the Pelagian heresy. For the letter written to Innocentius, the bishop of Rome, concerning the council of the province of Carthage, and the council of Numidia, and somewhat more accurately from five bishops, and the answer to these documents, also the epistle to Zozimus concerning the African council, and his answer sent to all the bishops of all churches, and my own brief argument in the last general council of Africa in confutation of this error, and my book abovementioned, which I wrote only for you, all these things I read over to them while they were with me, and by their hands I have now sent them to you. I have also read to them the book composed by the most blessed martyr Cyprian, on the prayer of our Lord, and have shewn them his precepts for the government of our lives, wherein he taught that all things are to be asked for from our heavenly Father, lest, presuming upon our own free will and power of choice, we fall from our dependence on divine grace. Where also we have clearly shewn in what manner the same most glorious martyr hath instructed us to pray for those who are yet unacquainted with the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, that they may become believers : which would be an unavailing precept, unless the church believed that the bad and faithless wills of men might be turned by the converting grace of God, to what is good and profitable. This book of Cyprian we have not sent, having been told that you were already possessors of it. My epistles to Sixtus, presbyter, which they brought with them to us, we have read with them, and have shewn them that it was written against those who say that the grace of God is imparted to us in respect of and in proportion to our merits ; that is, against these same Pela-

gians. To the best of our power, therefore, we have endeavoured to keep these men, and especially those who are united with you or with us in brotherhood, in the sound catholic faith; which neither denies the exercise of free will in the adoption of a good or evil course; nor yet ascribes so much efficacy to the free will, that without the grace of God it can prevail so as to effectuate a conversion from evil to good, or a progress in good, or such a fixed state of goodness as to be set above the fear of falling. And, my very dear and cherished friends, I exhort you in this letter, as the Apostle exhorts all men, "Not to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, but to think soberly according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Attend to the admonition of the Holy Spirit uttered by Solomon, "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established: turn not to the right hand, nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." The ways to the right hand are known to the Lord, but those which are to the left are perverse. But He will make straight thy paths, and will prolong thy journey in peace. On these words of holy writ deliberate, my brethren; for if there were no free will, it would not have been said, "Go straight on with your feet, neither turn to the right or to the left." And, nevertheless, if this could have been done without the grace of God, it would not afterwards have been said, "He will make straight thy way, and prolong thy journey in peace." Decline not, therefore, to the right hand, nor to the left: although the ways to the right are commended, and the ways to the left are reprov'd. And for this reason it is added, "turn thy foot from the evil way," i. e. from the left; which is shewn in what follows, "The ways which are to the right hand the Lord knoweth; but perverse are those which are to the left." Now we ought to walk in the ways which the Lord knoweth, of which in the Psalm it is said, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." This way the Lord knoweth not, because it is to the left; as He will one day say unto those who are on the left, "I do not know you." But what is it which He does

not know, who know all things from the men, whether they be good or bad. Wasn't then a signified by the words - "I know you not?" but this—sure as you I have not known—is the same sense as it said of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He knew no sin.

And by this also is said, "the ways which are to the right hand the Lord knoweth," how it is to be understood, but that He made the ways which are to the right—the paths of the upright, which are no other than those good works which God hath prepared, as says the Apostle, that we should walk in them. But the ways of the perverse, or wicked, He knoweth not, because He made them not for man, but man made them for himself. For which reason He saith, I hate the perverse ways of the wicked; which are on the left hand.

But then it may be said, in answer to us, why then hath He said turn neither to the right nor to the left, when it would seem more consonant for Him to have said, Maintain the right hand course, and decline not to the left. If the ways to the right are good, how can it be otherwise than good to decline to the right. Truly he must be understood to decline to the right who assigns to himself, and not to God, those good works which belong to the ways on the right hand.

The precept must be thus understood,—He will make thy path straight, and prolong thy journey in peace. And know that when you are taking this right course, that it is the Lord God which enables you to do this. And although you walk in the right hand path you will not *decline* to the right: which you would do if you proceeded in a confident reliance on your own strength. He will be your strength who directs your going in the way, and prolongs your journey in peace. Wherefore, my beloved, whosoever says my own will is sufficient to enable me to perform good works, *declines*, or stumbles in the right course. On the other hand, those who, when they are told of the grace of God, that it is able to change the wills of men from bad to good, reason thus—Let us do evil that good may come—decline to the left hand. It is on these accounts that we are admonished to *decline* neither to it

right nor to the left. Set not up your free will, so as to ascribe to it your good works without the grace of God, nor so maintain the power of grace, that in secure dependence upon it you do bad works, which election of evil may God put far from you. The false reasoning of such men the Apostle thus refutes, "What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" To this language of these erring men the Apostle answered as became him, "God forbid! for if we are dead to sin, how shall we live therein?" Nothing shorter and better could have been said, for what more beneficial and advantageous to us could the grace of God bestow on this present evil world, than that we should die unto sin! And ungrateful indeed would he prove himself to this grace who would turn that by which we die to sin into a justification for living in sin. May God, who is rich in mercy, vouchsafe to you the blessing of a sound mind, and of perseverance in every good purpose. This for yourselves, this for us, and this for all who love us, and for those who hate us, supplicate with earnest and vigilant prayer, in fraternal concord, that ye may live to God. If I deserve any thing from you, let brother Florus come to me.

TO THE VENERABLE LORD, AND BELOVED HOLY BROTHER,  
AND CO-PRESBYTER HIEROM, AUGUSTIN SENDS HEALTH  
IN THE LORD.

THERE has never occurred to me a better opportunity of transmitting a letter to you, than when I have been able to employ in that service a faithful minister and servant of God, and one especially dear to me on that account, and just such a person is our son Cyprian the deacon. Through such a medium of communication I have the best hope of your letters coming safely to hand, as he is certainly peculiarly qualified for this sort of agency: for this our said son has no lack of zeal in procuring answers, in setting forth one's title to them, in the careful custody of them, in the dispatchful conveyance of them, and in the faithful delivery of them. If I have in any

mer deserved it, may the Lord so dispose your bosom, and in favour to the wishes of my own, that no contrary inclination may oppose itself to the claims of the brotherly relation which we stand engaged to each other. As I sent two letters to you and received no answer, I was desirous again to transmit the same letters to you, concluding that what I had sent had never reached you. But if my prior letters did reach you, and your answers were by some accident prevented from coming to my hands, send again what you have so sent already, if you happen to have them now in your possession; and if not, may you dictate them afresh, that I may have the pleasure of rereading them; while I shall, nevertheless, hope that you will not think it a trouble to answer what I am now writing. For my part, I have felt a strong inclination to send you those old letters, which, when I was as yet a presbyter, I prepared, to be conveyed by a brother of mine, Profuturus, who, after he became my colleague, departed this life, having never been able to execute his errand, on account of the duties of the episcopate, which took up all his time to the moment of his death, that you might see by them how ardent has always been my desire to unbosom myself to you, and how sincerely I regret that I am denied, by the distance at which we are placed from each other, all opportunities of a personal intercourse with you, by which my mind might come, as it were, into contact with yours, my brother, in whom I find so much to love and revere.

I will take the opportunity of this letter to advert to what has lately come to my knowledge—that you have translated a book of Job from the Hebrew; after having already given your interpretation of the same prophet by turning into Latin the Greek of the Septuagint; in which version you have marked by an asterisk whatever is found in the Hebrew and is wanting in the Greek, and by an arrow what is found in the Greek and is wanting in the Hebrew, carrying these notations with wonderful accuracy, in some places, to single words. In a later version, which is made from the Hebrew, the same exactness as to the words in the Hebrew and not the Greek, or in



the Greek and not in the Hebrew, is not found : and one does not see a clear reason why, in that first translation from the Greek into Latin, asterisks should be so carefully introduced, to denote the omission in the Greek of the smallest parts of speech occurring in the Hebrew ; while in this other translation from the Hebrew a much less degree of care is taken in this particular. I should have been glad to have given you an example of what I mean, but I have had no Hebrew copy at hand ; though I am sure, such is the quickness of your perception, that no such help is necessary to make you understand either what I say or what I mean to say. I must own I should be better pleased to see you engaged in translating the Greek of the seventy interpreters of the canonical scriptures. It will be a lamentable consequence of your translation's coming into general use, if thereby the Greek and Latin churches shall be at variance in their creeds and doctrines. And this will be the greater evil, because an objector may be easily silenced by the production of the Greek version, that being a language of general notoriety ; whereas in a translation now made directly from the Hebrew, if one is surprised by any thing novel or unusual, or is induced to suspect any corrupt or erroneous rendering of the text, recourse is seldom or never had to the original for clearing up the difficulty. And if such appeal could without so much difficulty be made, would it not be vexatious, and tend to generate doubt and perplexity, to have the Greek and Latin authorities made subject to be so frequently impeached. And beyond all this, the Hebrews themselves, if consulted, might vary from you in their interpretation of a passage or word, so as to bring your single authority into conflict with theirs, and you would not easily find a person qualified to decide between you. For example—one of our brother bishops, making use of your translation in the church over which he presides, brought forward a passage translated by you in the book of the prophet Jonas ; to which you assigned a sense differing very much from the common meaning of the words received and established for ages. Such stir and tumult took place among the people, but especially among the

Greeks, complaining in such angry terms of a falsification of the text, that the bishop (for the place was a city) was compelled to ask the Jews for their testimony. But they, whether from ignorance or design, answered that the Hebrew in this instance did not differ from the Greek and Latin copies in their hands. What more need be said? the man was constrained by a regard to his personal safety, to correct what he had read out of your new translation, as a blunder. Whence we draw the inference that you may possibly be sometimes yourself in error. And see how difficult it is to secure correctness in words, unless where they may be ascertained by comparison of languages familiarly understood.

It is on this account that we ought to be full of thanks to God for having disposed and enabled you to translate the gospel from the Greek, since where a difficulty occurs, we may settle the question by an easy reference to the Greek original: and if any one shall from an habitual acquiescence in an inveterate mistake, refuse to relinquish his prejudice, he may be easily corrected or confuted by consulting and collating the copies. But the cause, as it occurs to you, of the discrepancy between the Hebrew and the Greek translation, which we call the Septuagint, I much wish you would have the kindness to explain: for surely a work must be regarded as of no mean authority which has been thought worthy of so wide a diffusion, and the adoption of which by the Apostles is proved by their writings,—a fact I have heard confirmed by your own testimony. And therefore you could be an instrument of much good, if you were to exhibit in Latin with the fidelity which may be expected from you, the Greek Septuagint, of which the different copies are so variant from each other, as to make it to be feared, that when any thing in scripture is to be proved out of it, the copy when produced may exhibit something different.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>59</sup> The Bible was translated into Greek from the Hebrew by the Hellenistic Jews of Alexandria, who had been so long unfamiliar with the Hebrew, that some errors were to be expected from them. The story by Aristeus, about the translation by the Seventy, is treated by Bentley, see *Phal.* i. v. 84, and by

I thought that this letter would have been but a short one, but I know not how, in writing on these matters, the pleasure I have experienced in its progress has been too like that of conversing with you, to allow itself to be soon relinquished. I beseech you, for the Lord's sake, not to be slow in answering this, touching all the matters contained therein. And to let me enjoy your presence as much as it is in your power to favour me with it.

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The imagination of St. Jerom was occasionally too vivid

Prideaux Connex. v. ii. 259, as a fable and cheat; it obtained, however, the name of Septuagint, as written by seventy persons, each executing the work separately, and all exactly agreeing. It was finished at Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Such was the credit of this Greek version, that the Evangelists and Apostles all quoted from it, and the primitive fathers after them. All the Greek churches used it, and the Latins had no other copy of the Scriptures in their language till Jerom's time, but what was translated from it. All the versions of the Gothic, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian, were made from it; the Syriac alone having been translated from the original Hebrew, which is still extant, and used by all the Syrian churches in the East. There was, however, another Syrian version made from the Septuagint.

The Septuagint was completed in 372, a. c. In after times three other versions of the Scriptures in Greek were prepared; one by Aquila, a proselyte Jew of Sinope, in the reign of Hadrian, a. d. 128. Another by Theodotion in the reign of Commodus; and a third by Symmachus, in the reigns of Severus and Caracalla. That by Aquila, was written to favour the prejudices of the Jews; the others, probably, in some measure, to serve the heretical sects in which they belonged.

All these four different Greek versions, of which that of Theodotion is esteemed the most correct, being between the literal and close translation of Aquila, and the free version of Symmachus, were collected into one volume by Origen, placing them in four different columns in the same page: which edition was called the tetrapla of Origen. The copies had been much corrupted, when Origen executed his edition. He cleared it from numerous mistakes, and reduced it to a better order. Some time after this, he published another edition, to which were added two columns, in the one of which was placed the Hebrew text in Hebrew characters, and in the other, the same Hebrew text in Greek characters: and this edition was called the Hexapla. His work was completed about the year 250, a. d.

Origen had used various marks in his edition to shew what was redundant,

and warm for the unembarrassed operation of his judgment; and his deviations might be the more likely to divert others from the sobriety of truth by the vigour and vivacity of his style. He entertained a notion that both St. Peter and St. Paul were equally opposed to the Judaizing spirit which was so prevalent among the Hebrew converts; and that the rebuke of St. Paul was only pretended on his part,<sup>60</sup> being the result of a previous arrangement and understanding between the two apostles, for impressing upon others the proper conduct to be observed by them, in reference to this subject. This opinion of Jerom was greatly disapproved of by Augustin; and the

and what was deficient, keeping the original text of the Septuagint entire; as the obelisk or sword to shew additions, and the asterisk to indicate omissions, and these, by the carelessness of subsequent copyists, had been often omitted, and thus many passages were again taken into the text as original parts of it, which were redundancies, and marked as such. Other errors had in various ways crept into the copies.

Jerom at first did no more than correct the Greek version of the Septuagint, and amend the common edition of the Hexapla of Origen, setting down the particulars in which the Septuagint differed from the Hebrew text. When he afterwards attained to a better acquaintance with the Hebrew, he put forth a new and entire Latin version of the original. His performance was received with much opposition. Augustin, as is seen above, had strong objections to it. Rufinus and others, who were his declared adversaries, accused him of perverting the Scriptures, and despising the authority of the Apostles, by rejecting the Septuagint translation. But Jerom stands abundantly vindicated by his own pen, and those of others, from all these charges.

<sup>60</sup> Jerom, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, explains himself on this head; there he says that "St. Paul acted this part with St. Peter, that the hypocrisy or false shew of observing the law, which offended those among the Gentiles who believed, might be corrected by the hypocrisy or false shew of reprehension; and that by this contrivance, both the one and the other might be safe, whilst the one who commended circumcision, followed St. Peter; and the others, who refused circumcision, adopted the liberty of St. Paul." This certainly, both as to the particular opinion and general maxim, no honest Christian of the present day will be disposed, any more than Augustin, to assent to. This laxity concerning truth, which passed under the name of officiosum mendacium, where it was conceived to be for the good of the church, was practised, even defended by many eminent Christian teachers of the fourth century.

Chrysostom and others of the Greek fathers (for the maxim had footing chiefly in the Greek church,) maintained that a falsehood was to be justified

controversy between them was maintained with so much characteristic feeling on each side, that the letters passing between them on this occasion deserve, in substance at least, to be produced as specimens of the characters and manners of the writers, and of the points about which they contended.

But before his letter is produced, a short account of Hierom or Jerom may be useful by way of introduction. He was born in Stridon, a city on the confines of Dalmatia, in the ancient Pannonia, as we learn from himself, in his catalogue of illustrious writers. The time of his birth was either in 329 or 340. He appears to have descended from a good family, and to have had a competent estate. He completed his studies at Rome under the famous grammarian Donatus. Here he made remarkable progress in the Greek and Latin tongues, and pleaded at the public bar. Under the government of Valens, he prosecuted his travels for improvement into France and various provinces of the West. He returned to Rome, and resided there, till his desire to proceed in his studies and spiritual exercises without interruption determined him to retire into the solitudes of Syria. Heliodorus, who had accompanied him thither, together with three other companions, soon became tired of the solitary sojourn, and returned into his own country; but was followed by an epistle of Jerom to implore him to return, blotted, as he tells him he would find it, with his tears. This epistle is so cha-

when it was to promote a good and sacred end. It was a pious fraud, and sanctified by its object. It was qualified also by the term *oikonomia* or dispensatio; and as such it is considered by Jerom in the following correspondence, and by Chrysostom in his first book on the priesthood.

The great Basil, in his lesser monastic rules, repudiates this utilitarian doctrine, because Christ says that a lie is of the devil, John v. 44; and he allows no distinction between lies; *τοις χυριον διαφοραν ψευδους οντινιαν ισημασταις*. The principle of dissimulation is very apt to multiply itself and to assume a variety of forms: there was claimed under it a licence of citing authorities without regard to correctness, as we find Jerom confessing himself to have done. In the lectures given to the Catechumens, the texts of Scripture are sometimes strained and tampered with, or disguised under some mystical, allegorical, or symbolical interpretation, to suit a special purpose. This has even been imputed to Augustin by some of the popish writers, when they have been pressed on the part of the protestants with the authority of that Father.



racteristic of Jerom, that a few lines from it may interest the reader. "Remember that in your baptism you enlisted yourself a soldier of Jesus Christ, and therein took an oath of fidelity to relinquish father and mother, and whatever was dear to you for his service. Though, therefore, your little nephew should hang about your neck, though your mother should rend her garments, and lay open the bosom that bear you; and though your father should lay himself down on the threshold to stop you, yet step over your father, and follow the standard of the cross with dry eyes; it is great mercy to be cruel on such occasions. I know you will say the scripture commands us to obey our parents, and I grant it to be true; but then consider that whosoever loves them more than Christ, loses his own soul."

In the solitudes of Syria, Jerom passed several years in laborious study and pious exercises, advancing himself in the Hebrew tongue, and writing commentaries on scripture. The loss of his companions, and severe sickness, induced him to leave the desert and repair to Antioch, where he was ordained a Presbyter, by Paulinus, who was then contending for that See with Meletius, and Vitalis. This took place in 374, A. D. Some years after this, he took a journey to Constantinople, where he passed some time in the company of Gregory Nazianzen; from whom he acknowledges himself to have derived much instruction. From Constantinople he went to Rome, about the affairs of Antioch. At Rome he continued for the space of three years, being detained there by Damasus, the bishop, who derived much assistance, in the jurisdiction of his See, from his great learning and abilities. While he was at Rome, he was engaged in a controversy with Helvidius, who had written a treatise to prove that, after the birth of Christ, the Virgin Mary had children by her husband Joseph. His arguments, drawn from two or three ambiguous passages, too well known to need a reference here, were pertinently answered by Jerom. It was, indeed, a point of presumptuous speculation, not admitting of a conclusive determination, and altogether a very unfit subject of disputation. During this interval of his life, he

formed a friendship with several eminent females of high birth and station, and among others with Paula, and Eustochium, to the latter of whom he addressed his discourse concerning the excellency of Virginity; laying down a system of severe rules for the conduct of a holy single life. He dissuades her from reading profane books, and tells her that being once too eager in the perusal of Cicero, Plautus, and other ancient classics, he was seized with a violent fever, and fell into an agony, in which he was carried by the spirit to the tribunal of Christ, where, having been severely scourged he was charged to indulge no more in such reading. This story he assured her was no dream; though when Rufinus afterwards upbraided him with his persevering, notwithstanding this chastisement and warning, in reading the classics, he ridiculed him for taking a dream to be a real truth. Jerome's conscience was certainly not over-severe on the question as to the permissibility of using fiction for promoting a pious end. At the expiration of three years from his coming to Rome, Jerom travelled again to Antioch, thence to Jerusalem and Egypt, and finally to Bethlehem in Palestine; here he took up his residence in a little cell, whither the devout ladies, Paula, Eustochium, and Melania, soon came, and the number of solitaries increasing around them, the first of those ladies erected a church and four monasteries.

Here he composed his treatise against Jovinian, in which he proceeded further in his defence of virginity, and offended many by his unwarrantable reflections on the state of matrimony, in the holy character of which, he could hardly be said to have acquiesced, in accordance with the great apostle to the Gentiles. His letter to Nepotian, the nephew of Heliodorus, on the office of the sacred ministry, and after his early decease, his consolatory epistle to the Uncle, are much celebrated: they certainly do honour to his pen, his principles, and his feelings. In his letter to Demetrias, the granddaughter of Proba, he argues again in defence and praise of virginity: but the chief merit of this letter consists in the clear and sound exposition it contains of divine grace, as the

gift of free mercy. His commentaries of scripture are among the best which the fathers have bequeathed to us. He died in his monastery at Bethlehem, in the year 420. A. C.

JEROM, IN ANSWER TO AUGUSTIN RESPECTING THE CHARGE OF "OFFICIUM MENDACIUM," AND CONCERNING THE TRANSLATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND THE PLANT MENTIONED IN JONAH.

*Domino vere sancto et beatissimo Papæ Augustino, Hieronymus in Christo salutem.*

THREE epistles, or rather little books, I have received from you at the same time, by the hands of the deacon Cyprian, containing what you are pleased to call questions, but what to my understanding are rather to be viewed as censures of my humble performances; and which it would require a volume to answer in full, if I were minded so to do. However, I will do my best to comprise what I have to say within the bounds of a letter somewhat extended, so as not to delay our brother, who undertakes to convey it to you, longer than can be avoided, since he is in haste to return, and has been urging me during the three days before his departure to be prepared with my letters; so as to throw on me the necessity of putting these sentences, such as they are, together, with a sort of tumultuous haste, rather dictating at a venture, than composing with deliberation; and trusting rather to what may accidentally occur, than to what such erudition as I may possess might furnish. I am in the condition of soldiers, who, however brave, are disturbed by a sudden onset, and compelled to betake themselves to flight ere they can seize hold of their arms. But Christ is our armour, and our discipline that of the apostle Paul, who thus warns the Ephesians, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day." And again; "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: above all, taking the shield

of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Armed with these weapons, David proceeded to the combat, taking with him from the brook five smooth stones, indicating the freedom of his thoughts from the disturbing things of the earth; and, refreshed by a draught from the clear stream, after smiting the blasphemer in the forehead, he struck off his head with his own sword. Let us, therefore, say, "O God, my heart is ready, my heart is ready: I will sing, and give praise with my glory. Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early;" that in us may be fulfilled the saying, "Open thy mouth wide, and I shall fill it." I have no doubt that you yourself pray that, in every contention between us, truth may prevail; for you seek not your own glory, but the glory of Christ: and when you conquer in the argument, I am also a conqueror by being conquered, if I am made thereby to perceive my own error. On the other hand, if I am victorious, a similar result will make you a partner in my victory.

You ask why I say, in my commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, that Paul could not possibly have meant seriously to reproach Peter for the very thing which he himself had done; or accuse him of that simulation of which he himself was equally guilty. And you assert, in opposition to my opinion, that the Apostle's rebuke was genuine, and not a mere feint for promoting their common object,—the dispensation of the truth of the Gospel; and that I ought not to teach that the Scriptures ever authorize a falsehood: to which I answer, that it became your discretion and candour to read the humble preface to my Commentaries, which speaks my sentiments on this subject. If anything appeared to you, in the exposition I have attempted to give of this matter, to be censurable, it would have been in better accordance with your erudition to inquire, whether what I have written was to be found in the Greek commentators; that if none of them should be found maintaining the same opinion with myself, it ought be justly condemned as one for which I stand solely responsible.

It was the more incumbent upon you to make this inquiry, as I have frankly confessed in my said preface that I have taken for my guide in this matter the commentaries of Origen, and that sometimes I have expressed my own, and sometimes another's sentiments; and at the end of the chapter in which you find so much to blame, I have written to this effect:<sup>61</sup>—

"If this explication of the passage in question should be thought objectionable by any one, in which it is shewn, that neither did Peter err, nor Paul petulantly arraign his superior in age, it behoves him to explain on what ground Paul would feel himself warranted in censuring in another the very thing which he himself had done." From which passage in my preface, it appears that I was not directly and expressly maintaining what I had found in the Greek commentators, but was merely setting forth what I had so read in their writings, that the reader might judge for himself whether this mode of expounding the translation in question deserved to be adopted or rejected by him. Your argument is rather a novel one. You maintain that the Gentiles who believed in Christ were exempt from the burthen of the law, while the believing Jews were subject to the law; and that, in the persons of the two Apostles, the whole doctrine was maintained—Paul, as a teacher of the Gentiles, reproved those who kept the law;

<sup>61</sup> This was surely very strange reasoning, and a confession throwing great ambiguity over all the statements and declarations of Jerom. Thus to retreat upon others when pressed by strong objections to any of his positions and expositions, was too much the habit of this very erudite father. If we are never to be sure whether Jerom is delivering his own judgment or the judgment of others, till the Greek commentators are looked through, the authority of Jerom must, indeed, lose much of its personal weight, and be much impaired in its power of producing conviction in the minds of his readers. The license which Jerom asserts to belong to disputation, of adopting almost any argument for the sake of carrying a point, is too familiar with him; and to be convinced of this, we have only to read his letter to Pammachius, wherein he maintains that there are divers sorts of discourse, and that it is one thing to write *γρηγορικῶς*, and another to write *δογματικῶς*. In this opinion he fortifies himself by the example of Demosthenes and Cicero among the orators, and Plato, Theophrastus, Xenophon, and Aristotle among the philosophers; and one feels shame in finding that he borrows countenance from Origen, Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinaris. See Hier. Ep. 50, ad Pammach.



and Peter is rightly reprehended for having, as the chief of the Circumcision, imposed that upon the Gentiles which it became only the Jewish converts to observe. Now, if you really are of opinion that the believing Jews were debtors to perform the ceremonial law, surely you ought, as being a bishop so famous through the whole world, to publish it universally, and to bring all your brother bishops to the same opinion. I dare not, in my little cell, with my fellow monks, that is, with my fellow sinners, pronounce a judgment on these great matters; but must be contented ingenuously to confess, that I consult the writings of those who have gone before me; and venture to propose some explanations in my Commentaries, agreeably to general usage, that, out of the many, every one may adopt what pleases him most: a method which, I think, you must have met with and approved of, both in secular and sacred literature.

This explanation of the passage in question, Origen, in the tenth book of his *Stromata*, where he comments upon the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, and the expositors who followed him, adopted, as affording an answer to the blasphemy of Porphyry, who charged Paul with petulance, as daring to reprimand Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and reprove him to his face for having committed the same fault of which he himself had been guilty. What shall I say of John (Chrysostom), lately the bishop of the church of Constantinople, who wrote very fully upon this chapter, in which he conformed to the opinion of Origen and the ancients? If, therefore, you reprehend me as being in error on this subject, suffer me, I beseech you, to err with men like these; and, as you see how many associates I have in my error, you ought surely to bring forward one authority to confirm the opinion you hold on this point. So much for my exposition of one of the chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians. But that I may not seem to rely on the number of my witnesses in opposing your reasoning on the subject, and to cover by illustrious names my evasion of the truth, from a fear of coming boldly to the conflict, I will bring forward some examples from Scripture itself.

In the Acts of the Apostles, we read, that a voice came to Peter, saying, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat;" that is, all animals, whether quadrupeds, or those that creep upon the earth, or those that fly in the air. By which command it is shewn that no man is by nature rejected, but all are equally invited to be partakers of the Gospel of Christ. Peter answered, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." And the voice from heaven spake unto him again the second time, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou unclean." Peter then proceeded to Cæsarea, and, having conversed with Cornelius, opened his mouth and said, "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." Then the Holy Ghost fell on them; and they of the circumcision, who believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then answered Peter, "Can any man forbid that these should be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And the Apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. But when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him saying, "Wherefore hast thou entered in to men uncircumcised, and hast eaten with them?" To whom, having explained the whole matter, he ended by saying, "If, then, God gave unto them the like grace which he did unto us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?" When they heard these things, they held their peace; and glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

Again, when a good while after this, Paul and Barnabas had come to Antioch, and to the assembled church had related what great things God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles; certain men who came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, "except

ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When, therefore, Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they resolved, both the persons accused and their accusers, to go up to Jerusalem, to the Apostles and Elders, about this question. And when they were come to Jerusalem, there arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed in Christ, saying, "that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And when there was much disputing, Peter, with his accustomed liberty, said unto them, "Men and brethren, ye know that a good while ago, God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us : and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. But we believe, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they." Then all the multitude kept silence. And James and all the Elders embraced his opinion. These things ought not to be tedious to the reader, but profitable both to him and myself, as they shew that, before Paul, Peter was not only not ignorant that, after the Gospel dispensation, the law was no longer to be observed, but that he was the chief promoter of the decree to that effect. In fine, so great was the authority of St. Peter, that Paul thus expressed himself in his epistles, "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days." And again, he says, "Fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles." From all which it appears that he felt insecure of his own correct exhibition of the Gospel, without the concurrence of Peter, and those who were with him. And then he adds, "but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in

tain." Now why did he do this privately, and not in public!—lest those of the Jews who had been converted to the faith, and who thought that the law should be observed, together with their belief in Christ, should be offended. On this account, when Peter came to Antioch, we are told by Paul, though no mention is made of it in the Acts of the Apostles, that he withdrew Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain persons came from James he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision: and the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; in so much that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews." No one can doubt that the Apostle Peter was the author and founder of the opinion which he now dissembled; and that the cause of his so dissembling was his fear of the Jews. As we have shewn, therefore, that Peter held a right opinion concerning the abolition of the law of Moses, but that he was constrained by his fears to put on the appearance of observing it, let us now see whether Paul, who so reproved him, did not act in the same manner from the like motive.

[Jerom then instances the circumcision by St. Paul, in his visit to Derbe and Lystra, of Timothy, who was the son of a believing Jewess and a Gentile father, which was done on account of the Jews who were in those parts: also the Apostle's shaving of his head at Cenchrea,<sup>62</sup> having accomplished his

<sup>62</sup> It may here be worthy of remark, that many commentators refer this vow to Aquila, whose name comes immediately before the mention of the incident. And if we refer it to Paul, it may still not denote any compliance with the Jewish ceremonies, since many of the learned, as Alberti and others, consider it as a mere civil vow, and not a vow of Nazariteship; but made probably, as was frequently done both by Jews and Gentiles, on account of some undertaking, or some deliverance from sickness, or other peril. Vulekauer refers *εὐχαριστήριον*, &c. to Aquila,

vow: and above all, the particulars related in the twenty chapter of Acts, wherein we are told that the Elders were with him, and approved of his Gospel, said to him follows, " You see, brother, how many thousands there are in Judea who believe in Christ, and these all are zealous of law. And they are informed concerning thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the custom, What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together; for they will hear that thou comest. Do therefore this that we say unto thee; we have men which have a vow on them; take them, and purify themselves with them; and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

From all which things on the part of St. Paul, done by him manifestly to avoid giving offence to the Jews, Jerom argues that St. Paul could not have seriously meant to cast reproach upon St. Peter for adopting the same appearance of asceticism in the Jewish ceremonial law, as he had himself assumed it expedient to assume when placed amidst Jewish converts to the faith, either at Jerusalem or on his travels; while they were equally convinced that the time was come for laying the law and economy aside, as superseded by the Gospel; that the reprehension of Peter by Paul at Antioch was not a matter of contention, but a matter of agreement, and that the great end which was equally the object of both of them.]

Jerom thus proceeds with his subject. The explanation which has occurred to me, and to others before me, of the whole matter ought not to make us seem to be persons detecting a pious fraud, as you consider us, but as justifying



measure designed to promote the gospel dispensation. You may express yourself in your letter to me. "Neither need I be taught by me how the Apostle is to be understood when he says, 'to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win the Jews;' and those other declarations of his to the same effect, which imply that the appearances so put on by him were not designed to impose a fallacy upon the Jews, but were out of commiserating tenderness for their prejudices. Just as one who is zealous in his services to the sick, puts himself, as it were, in the place of the sick; not falsely feigning to be sick, but, with a soothing and sympathizing mind, treats upon the patient as he himself, were he the sufferer, would wish to be waited upon. Being originally a Jew, though made a Christian, he had not abandoned the sacraments of the Jews, for which there was once a besitting time, and therefore allowed their continuance when he had become an Apostle of Christ, not considering them as being evil in their consequences to those who were willing to preserve, after their conversion to Christianity, what through the law they had received from their parents; not as placing in them their hopes of salvation, which was only to be looked for through Jesus Christ, and of which these sacraments were only the signs." I take the sense and meaning of your extended discussion to be this—that Peter did not err, simply in paying regard to the Jewish ceremonies, or in thinking that those ceremonies might be kept on foot, but in requiring from the *Gentiles* the same observances; not, indeed, by peremptory and express command, but by implication from his conversation and example. And Paul did not hold a language opposed to his own practice in this respect, but reproved Peter because he was for compelling the *Gentiles* to Judaize. This I conceive to be the true state of the question, and of the opinion to have expressed upon this subject, viz. that the believing Jews did well, after they had embraced the Gospel, in keeping up the observances of their law, in respect of their sabbaths, circumcising their children, as Paul had done in the case of Timothy, and in their sacrifices, which Paul himself had

offered. If this be the real state of the case, then are fallen into the heresy of Cerinthus and Ebion; who, though believers in Christ, were anathematized by the Fathers, because they blended the ceremonies of the law with the Gospel of Christ; and while they held the doctrines of the new dispensation, did not wholly cast off the old. What shall I say of the Ebionites, who gave themselves out for Christians? On this very day, throughout all the oriental synagogues, there is a heresy among the Jews, which is called the heresy of the Mineites, and is still denounced by the Pharisees. These are vulgarly named Nazarenes, who believe that Christ, the Son of God, was born of the Virgin Mary; and say that it was he who suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rose again; in which also we believe. Willing to be at the same time both Jews and Christians, they are, in the true sense of the term, neither Jews nor Christians. I must, therefore, entreat you that whilst you are exerting yourself to cure the little wound supposed to have been given by me, made as it were by the puncture of a needle, you would bethink yourself of the heavy wound which the opinion pronounced by you on the passage of Scripture has inflicted with the stroke of a ponderous spear: for surely, to set forth the various opinions of those who have lived before us on any part of the sacred writings, and to introduce a baneful heresy into the church, stand in very different degrees of culpability. But if there is a necessity upon us to receive the Jews with the rites and ceremonies of their law, and it is to be allowed to them to practise in the church of Christ the exercises of the synagogue, I must plainly tell you what I think will be the consequence: *they* will not become Christians, but they will make *us* Jews. For what Christian can read unmoved what is contained in your epistle—Paul was a Jew, but becoming a Christian, he did not deem it necessary to lay aside the sacraments of the Jews, which were once in seasonable, proper, and legitimate use among that people; and, therefore, though an Apostle of Christ, he did not scruple to celebrate them, that they might infer from his example that the observance of what they had derived from their ancestors would not be injurious to them.

Again, I beseech you to hear me with patience. Paul observed the ceremonies of the Jews when he was an Apostle of Christ; and you say that they were not hurtful to the Jews, who were desirous of keeping them, as they had received them from their fathers. I, on the contrary, affirm, and will publicly and in the face of the whole world affirm, that the ceremonies of the Jews are fraught with death and destruction to Christians. And whosoever shall observe them, whether he be Jew or Gentile, is falling fast into the abyss of Satan: for "Christ is the end of the law, and righteousness to every one that believeth," whether he be Jew or Gentile. But it will not be the end unto righteousness to every one that believeth, if the law is excepted. In the Gospel we read, "The law and the prophets were until John." And again, "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Of his fulness we all have received, and grace for grace, for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Instead of the grace of the law, which has passed away, we have received the permanent grace of the Gospel, and in the place of the shadows and images of the Old Testament the truth has come by Jesus Christ. Thus does Jeremiah prophecy from the inspiration of God—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt." Observe, it is not to the Gentile people, who had not before received the covenant, that he promises the new covenant, but to the nation of the Jews, to whom He had given the law by Moses, that he promises the new covenant of the Gospel, that they might no longer live in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit.

Paul, in whose name this question is agitated, has frequent passages in his writings of the same tenour, from which, for brevity sake, I will weave some together. Behold, I Paul say

unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing:" and again, "Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are not from grace:" and, "If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." From which it is manifest that he is under the law, in the sense in which you understand it, as our ancestors regarded it, as belonging to the dispensation under which they lived, has not the Holy Spirit. Notwithstanding the precepts of the law are, let us learn from God's testimony, "I gave them also statutes which were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live." These things are not that we may destroy the law, which we know is spiritual, according to the Apostle, but because affairs succeeded, and the fulness of the times, God sent His Son, born of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law, that we might be the adoption of children, and might no longer be under a schoolmaster. You proceed in your epistle as follows: "I did not reprove Peter because he had observed the law of his fathers, which, if he were willing to do, he would have acted neither falsely nor inconsistently." To which you add again, you are a bishop, a ruler of the churches of God, and you prove the truth of your assertion: shew me, if you can, a man who, having become a Christian, circumcises his child, who observes his ancient Sabbath; who abstains from meats which God has created to be used with thanksgiving; who on the fourteenth day of the first month, slays a lamb for an evening sacrifice. When you shall have found that you can do this, you will be constrained to renounce your position, which you will perceive how much more difficult to establish, than to censure the opinions of others. But should you distrust, or not understand, what you say in your discourse drawn out to great length is apt to be not understood, and by its obscurity goes without its due reproof from the unskilful, you repeat, and inculcate, the repudiated whatever practice of the Jews had evil in it: what is the evil repudiated by Paul? It is thus that

describe it—"being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God."

In the next place, that after the passion and resurrection of Christ, and after the sacrament of grace had been proffered and manifested, according to the order of Melchisedech, they still persisted in thinking the old sacraments were to be celebrated, not out of regard to their accustomed solemnity, but from a persuasion that they were necessary to our salvation. Which, nevertheless, if they were never necessary, the martyrdom of the Maccabeans was undergone vainly and gratuitously. And lastly, that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace, as enemies of the Jewish law." These, and other similar errors and corrupt opinions and practices, Paul, you say, declares himself to condemn. And it is thus we have learned from you what were the evils of the Jewish system which Paul abandoned. And, on the other hand, you inform us what are the good things of that dispensation proper to be retained. You will say, they were only such observances as Paul himself practised, without imputing to them any necessity as respects our salvation. What you mean by this necessity as respects our salvation, I confess I do not well understand. For if they do not conduce to salvation, why are they observed? If they ought to be observed, they must be necessarily connected with our salvation. Many of our actions may be neither essentially bad or good: as concerning neither righteousness or unrighteousness, we may walk between them indifferent as to either; but the observance of the ceremonies of the law cannot be matter of indifference. You pronounce them to be good, I say they are bad; and bad not only as respects the Gentiles, but as respects those of the Jewish nation who believe. On this topic, while you would avoid one consequence, you lapse into another: for while you are in dread of the blasphemy of Porphyry, you fall into the snare of Ebion, in apologizing for the observance of the law by the Jewish believers.<sup>63</sup> And

<sup>63</sup> Porphyry had said that the contention between Peter and Paul was mere puerile play; to which blasphemy Augustin thought the light in which Jeron



because you are aware of the dangerous ground on which you stand, you endeavour by the addition of some nugatory expressions to temper your propositions. Thus you would be understood to say that Paul observed the ceremonies of the law without considering them as in any measure necessary to salvation; or without any of that deceitful simulation which he reprehended in Peter. You consider that Peter affected only to maintain the legal ceremonies, while Paul openly and boldly observed them. And then you proceed to say—For if he only celebrated those sacraments because he would appear to be a Jew, that he might thereby gain the Jews, why did he not also sacrifice with the Gentiles?<sup>64</sup> becoming as without the law to those who were without the law, that he might gain the Gentiles: unless that being born a Jew, what he did as a Jew was done, not that he might put on the appearance of being what he was not, but that he perceived he would be performing a charitable and feeling part towards his countrymen, by acting as if he was of their persuasion as to keeping up the ceremonies of the law; his object being rather to sympathize with them than to deceive them. Thus you set up a notable defence for Paul, by shewing him not to have simulated the error of the Jews, but to have really been a partaker of their error. He was not, it seems, willing to follow Peter in dissembling for fear of the Jews, but frankly, and without any such fear, declared himself a Jew. Thus has the Apostle presented us with a rare example of compassion:—in order to make the Jews Christians, he has himself become a Jew. As if the only effectual way of recalling the luxurious to a life of temperance would be to prove oneself as luxurious as they; or of consoling the wretched, to make oneself alike miserable. I cannot but think those to be in bad case who, from a love of contention, and of an abolished law, have represented as a Jew an Apostle of Christ. We

had considered the case lent a dangerous colour. It will be seen in a subsequent letter, from Augustin to Jerom, how strongly he rejects the notion of what he calls a *mendacium officiosum*.

<sup>64</sup> This argument of Jerom seems to be worse than weak.

differ more in the motives than in the effect ascribed by us to the conduct of the Apostles ; for whether they acted from fear or commiseration, they put on the appearance, in either case, of being what they really were not. You say that my mode of accounting for the conduct of the Apostles, by imputing it to simulation, rests upon reasoning which requires also that there should have been the same imitation of the Gentiles, but what you thus urge upon me makes rather for me than against me. For as Paul was not really a Jew, so neither was he really a Gentile ; but he conformed to the Gentiles in rejecting circumcision, in permitting things to be eaten which the Jews forbid to be eaten, while the worship of their idols he condemned. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision is any thing nor uncircumcision, but obedience to the commandments of God.

I beseech you, therefore, and again and again entreat you to pardon this my little argumentative essay, and if I have affected something above my measure, you must impute it to yourself, who have compelled me to write. Do not think me to be the patron of a lie, who am, indeed, a follower of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. It can never be that I, who have so long been a worshipper of truth, could suddenly so change my character, and enter into the service of falsehood. Do not stir up against me a multitude of the mean and ignorant, who reverence you as their bishop, and hear your declamations in the church with the homage which belongs to sacerdotal dignity, while of me they make little account, as one in the decrepitude of second childhood, and almost buried in the obscurity of rural and monastic seclusion ; but rather seek one on whom you may more fitly bestow your lessons and corrections. Separated as we are from you by so wide an interval of sea and land, the sound of your voice is scarcely heard by us ; and if perchance you write letters, they are spread over Rome and Italy before they find their way to me, to whom they are sent. In the question you put to me in some of your other letters—why my former interpretation of the canonical books have asterisks and marks of reference,

and this subsequent translation are without such signs; with your leave I must say, you appear to me not to understand what you inquire about. That was an interpretation of the seventy interpreters, and wherever rods or arrows occur, they are designed to indicate that the seventy have said more than that which is said in the Hebrew; but when the sign used is an asterisk or star, that something is added from the edition of Theodotion by Origen. There we translated the Greek: here we have set forth our understanding of the Hebrew itself, having regard rather to the true meaning than the literal expression. And I cannot but wonder that you should read the books of the seventy interpreters, not in their pure state, as produced by them, but as they are corrected by Origen, and disfigured and corrupted by arrows and asterisks; considering, too, that that translation included the additions from the edition of a blaspheming Jew, and do not rather prefer the humble translation of a Christian man from the original Hebrew. You would fain be regarded as a true lover of the septuagint version.

It has not been so much my aim to supersede what I have formerly translated correctly from the Greek into Latin for those who are conversant only with my own language, as to lay before the reader the testimonies which have been pretermitted or corrupted by the Jews, that my countrymen might be made acquainted with what the authentic Hebrew does really contain. No one need peruse what I write unless he is willing. Let him drink the old wine with what zest he may, and despise, if he be so minded, the new which I have since placed before him; that what was before imperfectly understood, may become plain and clear. The kind of interpretation which should be adopted, or the exposition of the Scriptures, in the book which I have written on that subject, and the little prefaces which I have prefixed to my edition of the sacred volume, I have endeavoured to explain; and to them I think I may refer the reader. And if, as you say, you welcome me in my corrections of the New Testament, and give as your reason that a large number by their acquaintance with the

Greek language, are capable of doing justice to the merits of the work, you ought to think equally well of the integrity of my edition of the Old Testament, since it is not the product of my own invention, but the translation of the words of inspiration, as I have found them in the Hebrew original.

It seems, therefore, from your statements, that something on the prophet Jonah was not rightly interpreted by me, and that the offence given by a single word put the bishop's high office in jeopardy. And you keep from me the disclosure of the particular error with which I am charged, thus denying me the opportunity of defending myself, in an answer to the accusation. And I should probably have remained in this ignorance, but for the assertion of Cornelius and Asinius made long ago, that I had given ivy as the meaning of the word in the original instead of gourd : respecting which point, having given a full answer in our commentary on the prophet Jonah, we shall content ourselves with saying here only thus much, that in the place in which the seventy, and Aquila, among others, have rendered the Hebrew by the word ivy, that is κρον, the word in the original is קרפא cicion,<sup>63</sup> which the Syrians call ciceiam. It is a kind of shrub, having broad leaves, like a vine. It rises quickly after being planted into a shrub without any props or supports, sustained upon its own stem. If I were to render the Hebrew word by cicion, nobody would be the wiser ; if by cucurbita, (gourd) I should make use of a word not in correspondence with the Hebrew. I have used hederā (ivy) in concurrence with other commentators. But if your Jews, as you say, either from malice or ignorance, affirm that the word in the Greek and Latin copies, is the same in signification as that in the Hebrew Scriptures, it is plain they are either ignorant of the Hebrew language, or choose to lie in order to laugh at the advocates of the gourd, or cucurbitarians.

<sup>63</sup> By others this has been thought to be the κρον or κικι of the Greeks, — the same as what we call palma Christi ; which is chiefly found in America ; and has received the name of *Ricinus Americanus*. The Seventy have rendered the word by κολοκυνθη.

In conclusion, let me beg you not to force into the field a quiet old soldier, long laid by. You who have the strength of youth, and the influence of high station, teach the people, and enrich the families of Rome with the products of Africa; for me, it is enough to whisper my lectures in the corner of a monastery to some simple auditor or reader who may think me worthy of his attention.

## HIERONYMUS AUGUSTINO.

Domino vere sancto ac beatissimo Papæ Augustino, Hieronymus in Christo salutem.

YOUR letters assure me that you did not send that long letter, or rather book to Rome written to fall with all its weight upon my defenceless insignificance. Indeed, I had not heard that such was the fact, but the copies of a certain epistle seeming to be intended for me, found their way hither, by the hand of our brother the Deacon Sysinnes, in which you advise me to chant my palinode upon a certain chapter of the Apostles, and to imitate Stesichorus fluctuating between the invectives and praises of Helen, by reproaching whom he lost his eyes, and recovered them again by passing from reproaches to praise. In all simplicity I confess that although the style and method of reasoning seemed to be yours, still I could not hastily give credit to those copies, lest by the answer they might naturally produce, you might be wounded, and justly retort that it became me to wait for satisfactory proof that the letter was yours, before I answered it in such terms. What has tended to delay my answer, has been the long illness of the holy and venerable Paula; for while I was taken up with my anxious attendance upon her in her drooping state, the very remembrance of your letter, or of that which some one may have written in your name, was really banished from my mind; exemplifying what is said in Ecclesiasticus, 22nd chapter, "a tale out of time is as music in a time of mourning."

If it be your letter, pray write openly, or at least let me be favoured with genuine copies; that without any angry feelings



we may conduct our controversy on points of Scripture; and may correct our errors if we are in the wrong, or show wherem we have been groundlessly censured. But far be it from me that I should presume to find any fault with any thing written by one to whom so much reverence is due. It is quite enough for me to defend my own productions, without attacking those of others. Your experience must have well informed you that we all of us stand high in our own opinion, and that it is a puerile propensity to endeavour to set up one's own importance by disparaging illustrious names. I am not such a simpleton as to be hurt by your differing from me on any interpretation of Scripture, and you will not, I am sure, be offended when I express my dissentience from you. But we read in Persius's Satires,<sup>66</sup> what is the true character of reproof interchanged by friends:

*"U' nemo in sese tentat descendere: nemo:  
Sed præcedenti spectatur mantica tergo."*

It remains only for me to add my request that you will continue to love one who really loves you; and do not by your attacks draw me forth into the field on Scriptural topics. I have had my day, and have run as long as I could. Now while you pursue your course over a wider circuit, let me enjoy the repose which I trust I have earned. At the same time with your good leave I will borrow from the poets as well as you. Remember Dares and Entellus; and be mindful also of the vulgar proverb, that the "wearied ox treads with a heavier step."

I have written these things with a mind ill at ease. Would that I were more worthy of your kind professions of attachment; and that, by comparing our thoughts in a personal intercourse, we might in some things be helps to each other. Calpurnius,<sup>67</sup> surnamed Lanarius, with his accustomed violence, has sent me his maledictions, which, by his zeal, have found their way into Africa, and which I have in part briefly

<sup>66</sup> Sat. iv. l. 221.

<sup>67</sup> Rufinus.

answered. I have sent you copies of his little book, and by the first opportunity you shall have the larger work ; in which I have been cautious not in anything to wound the cause of Christianity, my object being only to confute the mendacity, and expose the folly of an ignorant and frantic writer. Think of me, holy and venerable father. Consider as an evidence of my affection, my unwillingness to answer you, though challenged by you ; and my backwardness in believing that of you, which in another I should probably reprehend. Our common brother most humbly salutes you.

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The irritable disposition of the same learned and distinguished father further shews itself in another letter to Augustin, of which what follows is a part.

“ To make a frank confession of the truth, I felt at first a repugnance to answer you, because it was not perfectly clear that it was *your* letter which came to my hands, nor, according to the common saying, was the sword covered over with honey. In the next place, I was desirous of avoiding all appearance of answering a bishop of my own communion with irreverence, and to retort upon him his own reproof, especially as it might happen that some things in his letter might appear to my judgment to border upon heresy. And lastly, I was afraid you might expostulate, and say, “ What ! had you then seen what you chose to consider as my epistle, and recognized in the subscription a hand-writing familiar to you, that you might have a pretext for injuring your friend ; and avail yourself of another’s malice to fix a reproach upon me ? It comes to this ;—either send me the same epistle signed with your hand, or desist from worrying an aged man, living concealed in the solitude of his cell. But if you desire to exercise or display your learning, do, pray, seek out some young men, eloquent and famous, such as are said to abound in Rome, who have both ability and courage, and are worthy to dispute with a bishop on Scriptural questions. As for me, who was once a soldier, but am now a veteran and unfit for service, my

province is to sit by and applaud the victories of others; but by no means, with my worn-out body, to enter the field again. Should I be provoked to answer your repeated challenges, I will remind you of what history records of Fabius Maximus, who, by his wise delay, humbled the pride of the youthful Hannibal.

"But since you protest that you wrote no epistle against me, nor sent to Rome anything to the same purpose not written by you; and further add, that if any matters shall be found in any of your writings which maintains an opinion opposed to mine, no attack was thereby meditated upon me, to wound my character or feelings, but that you merely committed to paper what appeared to you to be right; I only request you to hear me with patience. You have not written an epistle! Then can you explain how it is that I find myself censured by you in what was written by others; and that all Italy should be in possession of what was not written by you. And yet you seem to expect an answer from me to what you say you did not write; which is surely unreasonable.

"Do not think me so absurd as to be mortified by your offering from me in opinion. But I do say, that if you find fault with anything said by me in conversation with you; and exact from me an apology for my writings, and call upon me to reform what I have written, and urge me to sing my palinode, and talk of teaching me to use my eyes better; in all this, I must think that a wound is given to our friendship, and the rights of that intimate relation violated. I am anxious that we may not appear to be carrying on a childish contest, or afford matter of controversy or faction to any who take the part of one of us against the other, or to our common detractors; for I do really much wish to love you with all Christian truth and purity; nor do I say one thing and think another. It would indeed be most strange and unseemly if I, who have been labouring from my youth till this present moment in a little monastery, among my pious brothers, should presume to write anything against a bishop of my own communion, and that, too, a bishop whom I began to love before I enjoyed a per-

sonal acquaintance with him; who invited me to become his friend by making the first advances; whose rising merit, as cultivating after me the study of the sacred Scriptures, I viewed with much delight. Upon the strength of all this, I call upon you either to deny the epistle in question to be yours, if this be so; and cease to ask for an answer to a letter which you say you did not write; or ingenuously to own it to be yours, that, if I shall write anything in defence of myself, the blame may rest upon you, who have provoked the answer, not on me who have been compelled to make it. You add, moreover, that if anything in your writings have made me uneasy, or have seemed to me to require correction, you will listen to my remarks as coming from a brother, and will not only rejoice in them as a proof of my attachment, but pray that I will persist in the same friendly interference.

"Again hear what I think. You challenge an old man, and force a silent one into controversy; while you seem to brandish your learning in my face. But it would ill become my age to give place to any angry feelings in my intercourse with one towards whom I ought to demean myself with all kindness and respect. Since perverse men have always found something in the prophets and evangelists with which they endeavour to find fault; do you wonder that in your books, and especially in your exposition of the Scriptures, which are often very obscure in some things, you should seem to deviate from the correct path? And this I say, not in reference to any passages in your writings which I think reprehensible. Indeed, I have not given any particular attention to the perusal of them; nor do the copies of them abound with us, except the books of your Soliloquies, and your Commentaries on the Psalms, which, if I were willing to discuss, I could tell you, perhaps, that they are sometimes at variance, not with mine, for I am nothing, but with the sense of the old Greek interpreters. Farewell, my very dear friend, in age my son, but in dignity my parent; and take care, I pray you, in future, that whatever you write to me may come to me before it goes to others."

The following portion of a letter, written in answer to the rather peevish attack of Jerom, bears a favourable testimony to the Christian temper of Augustin.

Far be it from me to be mortified by your being willing to be able to shew, that you have understood the passage in question from St. Paul, or any other passage of the sacred scriptures, more correctly than myself; nay, far be it from me not to receive the boon with gratitude, if I should gather instruction from your teaching, and improvement from your correction. Truly, my very dear brother, unless you felt yourself wounded by what I wrote, you would not suppose that I should be wounded by what you wrote in answer. I have always thought too well of your sincerity to doubt of your being really hurt, when you write in terms which wounded feelings could alone justify. But if, when you do not write to me in this tone, you should deem so ill of me as to suppose it possible for me to be irritated, you would indeed wound me, by entertaining such thoughts of me."

He then makes the following acknowledgment, "And now it pains only for me to acknowledge my fault, in giving you the offence by that letter, of which I must confess myself to have been indeed the writer. For why strive against the current, and not rather at once throw myself upon your clemency. I beseech you, therefore, by the gentleness of Christ, if I have given you uneasiness, to pass it by; and not to return evil for evil, by exciting in me the same painful feelings. At the same time, let me assure you that you will always mortify me by omitting to tell me plainly of my errors, either in acts or in words. If, indeed, you blame me for what is not reprehensible, you injure yourself rather than me. But far be it from your manners, and the purposes of your pious mind, to blame me, with a design to give me pain; passing a fitting censure upon me for that for which your heart tells me I ought not to be blamed. You may reprove with tenderness one who has committed no fault, but whom you think to be in fault, or you may do it with so much kindness, and in such a spirit of paternal affection, as to soften one whom you



cannot discard. You may take an erroneous view of a fact, and yet see nothing in a light which charity forbids. I will very thankfully receive your reproofs, which I know to proceed from a most friendly disposition towards me, even where the subject of your blame is capable of being well defended; and shall always be ready to confess your kindness, and my own delinquency; and, by the grace of God, I trust I shall be found better for your correction, and thankful for being made so. Why, then, if your words be salutary, though a little hard, need I fear them as the cestus of Entellus. Dares was beaten and vanquished, but neither cared for, nor cured; but if I quietly receive your medicinal chastisement, it will leave behind it no cause of regret.

If, indeed, my human weakness, when I am convicted on just and true grounds, cannot help being somewhat painfully affected, it is better to suffer pain in being cured, than to escape pain by retaining one's malady. This was well understood by him who said that accusing enemies are more useful than friends, who fear to reprove. Those who treat us reproachfully, furnish us occasionally with hints for our correction; but flattering friends sacrifice the sacred rights of justice rather than disturb the smooth current of affection. If, then, you are to be likened to a tired ox, it is because, perhaps, age has relaxed your sinews without reducing the vigour of your mind; while in the Lord's threshing-floor you remit nothing of your fruitful labour. Lo, then, here I am at your mercy! if anything has unadvisedly escaped my lips, let the weight of your tread be upon me. Such pressure ought not to be grievous to me, so long as my fault is thereby sifted, and the wheat is separated from the straw and chaff. The sentiments you express towards the end of your letter I read and recall to memory with a sigh of sincere regret. "I wish, you say, I better deserved to embrace, and to be embraced by you; by an interchange of our thoughts, face to face, we should teach and learn with mutual advantage." To which I answer, would that we lived at a less distance from one another, so that, if our opportunities of personal intercourse were

It improved, our correspondence by letter might at least come more easy and frequent. But now, unhappily, at so great a distance are we thrown from each other, that I remember my writing to you when I was but a youth, concerning those words of the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians, and behold, I am become an old man without having yet merited an answer. Copies of my epistle have more easily found their way to you, by what means I know not, than the letter itself, the conveyance of which I had myself done my best to secure; for the man to whose care I had committed the same, neither brought you that letter, or to me any letter in return.

So important have been the contents of those of your letters which have reached my hands, that I could not wish for anything better for the successful prosecution of my studies than to be constantly by your side. But as this cannot be, I meditate sending one of our children in the Lord to be instructed by you, if upon this subject I shall be thought worthy of an answer. For I neither have acquired, nor am able to acquire that knowledge of the Holy Scriptures which you possess; and if I do possess any of this knowledge, I expend it all on the people of God: for I have really no leisure from my ministerial occupations for any studies but those by which the people under my charge may be edified.

I know not what evil reports have reached us here, in writing, concerning you. I have received, however, the answer to them which you have been so kind as to send to me; on the perusal of which, I own I felt truly sorry that between such dear and intimate friends,<sup>68</sup> united by a bond

<sup>68</sup> The dissension between Jerom and Ruffinus is a well known event of ecclesiastical history. The cause of this great evil in the church was a Latin version of the work of Origen, *περί ἀρχῶν*, which was executed by the presbyter of Aquileia, at Rome, about the year 398; and to which he prefixed a preface, wherein Jerom, with much praise, was represented as having espoused the tenets of Origen, and as associated with himself in opinion. He boasted that he could bring out the work of Origen, freed by himself from the errors imputed to it; but as many dangerous opinions still appeared in the work exhibited by

of attachment known through all the churches, so much discord should have arisen. The control, indeed, which exert over yourself, and the degree in which you restrain risings of indignation from answering reproaches by reproach sufficiently appears by your letters. Nevertheless when I those letters, I was overcome by grief, and petrified with at the very thought of the vexation I should feel if what Rufinus had written against you should fall into my hands. "Unto the world because of offences." Behold the time is come behold now is fulfilled what the truth has predicted. "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Where is to be found mutual trust and confidence? who can love securely repose? where is the friend who is not to be feared as a future enemy? if between Hieronymus and Rufinus such a lamentable feud can arise? O wretched and deplorable state of things! O that mutual distrust which not suffer friends who have no knowledge of what may befall them, to enjoy their present felicity! But why should I complain of the changeableness of another, when we are all ignorant of our future selves. Hardly does a man know himself as he is; how then can he tell what he will be. If only this knowledge of what one is, but also of what one will be, were the property of the holy and blessed angels, Satan could have been blessed when as yet he was an angel, with such knowledge of his future iniquity, and everlasting punishment, I do not see. On which matter

Rufinus, Pammachius and Oceanus persuaded Jerom to produce a Latin interpretation of it, that the errors it contained might appear in their fullness and so to manifest to the world that the suspicion endeavoured to be cast upon him by his rival of being a favourer of Origen, was without foundation. By thus an exact translation of Origen's work was produced, his opinions stood out in their real deformity. Jerom at the same time published an epistle to Pammachius and Oceanus, in which he repelled the calumny of his approbation of Origen, and explained the intention and reservation with which he had formerly commended Origen. By this quarrel the whole state of the church was thrown into much agitation. Rufinus wrote a defence of himself to Pope Anastasius in which fresh calumnies were thrown upon Jerom, and to which Jerom answered in three apologetical books.

as you think the subject of any importance, I should be glad to have your opinion. But see the effect of this wide personal separation, with so much sea and land between us. Were I in the place of this letter when you read it, you could answer my question at once. But when will you write? when will you send to me? when will what you send find its way to this quarter? when will it come to my hands? what I desire under actual circumstances is this, that what can not be as soon as I could wish it to be, I may wait for with patience: and to strengthen this patience, I recur to those truly refreshing words of your letter so full of sanctified affection, and endeavour to make them my own. O could I deserve your embrace, and enjoy in person that intercourse in which, as you have expressed it, we might mutually teach and be taught! if, indeed, by any possibility I could be your instructor. There is a sort of freshness and delight in dwelling upon these thoughts, not only as they are expressed in your words, but even in my own. And although they cannot bring us into contact, they so draw our minds together in a mutual dependance, that to me they are a source of no little comfort. Then again, I am affected with the keenest sorrow that between you and Rufinus, to whom God has conceded in so large a measure those gifts which have always been the objects of our most ardent wishes, and who have in such close and intimate friendship partaken together of the honey of the holy Scriptures, so bitter a quarrel should have arisen. What time, what place, what human being can in future be regarded as secure from discord; after it has been found that a quarrel so severe could happen to such men as you, mature in age, and in communion with your Saviour; at a time too, when having rid yourselves alike of your worldly burthens, you were following the Lord as companions, and were walking harmoniously together in that land which our Lord had trod with human feet, and where he had said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."

Truly this life is a continual trial. Alas! that I cannot somewhere meet you together; that I might cast myself at your feet; pour out my tears without restraint, and give full

vent to my love in the language of supplication, addressed to each of you for his own sake, and to each for the sake of the other, and to both, for the sake of all others; and especially of the poor and weak, for whom Christ died, and who we regard you as great actors on life's theatre, with no little danger to themselves. Do not in your writings concerning each other spread abroad things which you will be unable to cancel or obliterate when, if ever, a reconciliation shall take place,—things which you will be afraid to read, as containing the elements of a new discord between you.

I must confess to you that nothing disheartened me so much as this example, when I read in your letter to me some indications of your sore displeasure; not in what you say of Entellus and the tired ox, for in that I see rather a playful than an angry spirit, but in what you write in a more serious manner as when you say "lest perhaps being wounded and irritated you might think it just to expostulate." Let us, I beseech you, if it be possible, inquire into and discuss such matters only as can not endanger our friendship; but if I can not see what I think requires correction in your writings, nor you in mine, without the suspicion of envy, or a wound given to friendship; let us, I pray, as we value our comfort and our soul's health, abstain from all topics of communication. Far indeed, do I feel myself to be from that perfection, of which it is written "If any one offends not in word, he is a perfect man." But surely I may expect easily to obtain your forgiveness, in accordance with the mercy we expect from God, if in any thing I have given you offence. And when I have the misfortune so to do, you ought frankly to tell me of it, that by such disclosure you may benefit your brother; and, con-

<sup>60</sup> What scholar in reading this sentiment has not the beautiful passage, which Sophocles puts into the mouth of Ajax, brought to his mind:

ὁ γ' ἐχθρὸς ἡμῖν ἐς τοσσόνδ' ἐχθραντιός,  
ὥς ἐμὲ φίλησον αὐτίς. Σοφοκλ. Λίας, 679.

Our hostility towards an enemy should never be carried so far, as not to leave room for returning friendship.



sidering the length of territory that keeps us from communication, my errors are entitled to your forbearance. For myself I will say, that as to those things the knowledge of which we both of us covet; if at any time I know, or believe, or think I hold a right opinion though different from yours, I will endeavour to maintain that opinion, by the grace of God, in such a manner as to avoid giving you the least umbrage or offence. But if I shall in spite of my caution be so unhappy as to incur your displeasure, my next endeavour shall be to obtain your pardon. I cannot, however, persuade myself that you can be offended with me, unless for having said something which I ought not to have said, or for having said something in a way in which I ought not to have said it; nor does it appear strange to me that we ourselves should know less of each other's mind, from direct intercourse by letters, than from the communications of our familiar and intimate friends; upon whose benevolence and candour, when wearied with the calumnies of the world, I cast myself with entire confidence; for in the charity of my friends I recognize the Divine guidance, and to that guidance I commit myself with a mind devoid of fear and anxiety, while I am fully impressed with the uncertainty which hangs over the events of the morrow, as far as they belong to human fragility. For when I perceive that a man with a bosom glowing with Christian charity, has become my faithful friend, whatsoever thoughts or counsels of my heart I confide to such a man, I consider myself as committing them to Him who has made him what he is. God is love, and whosoever abideth in love, abideth in God: and upon the absence or presence of love in the bosom, depends much of the felicity or sorrow of life. But if from an intimate friend, a man becomes my enemy, I would rather his ingenuity should be tasked to find something to charge me with, than his anger be supplied with what he may betray concerning me; and the best way of putting things in this position, is not to conceal what one does, but to do only what one has no need to conceal. The mercy of God enables the good and pious to live securely and without fear amidst those

friends who may become their enemies, by neither betraying the errors of those who confide in them, nor doing what may make them dependent on the secrecy of others. What the tongue of the slanderer may forge against us, is either discredited, or if believed, affects our fame only, without injury to the soul's welfare. When evil is done, some enemy is always in the secret; without waiting for loquacity or quarrel to make their disclosures.

Who that has discernment does not see with what equanimity you bear the incredible hostility of your once most intimate and familiar friend;<sup>70</sup> your conscience consoling you: and how you cut down his boastings, which may have been too much listened to by some, with your armour on the left; for with the armour on the left hand, as well as with the armour on the right, the battle is to be maintained against the great adversary; though it were to be desired that the contest between you should cease by his becoming gentler, rather than by your becoming more formidably armed. A truly wonderful thing it is to see the transition from such friendships to such enmities: and joyful indeed would it be to witness the return to concord, from quarrels so unnatural.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Ruffinus.

<sup>71</sup> A letter written in a more Christian spirit is not to be found among the best scholars in the school of Christ; and one cannot but regret the opposition existing between this delightful document, and the sentiments and opinions which occasionally, but unfrequently, escape from the pen of this most amiable of all the fathers. In his long and elaborate epistle to Vincentius, though he acknowledges there was a time in which he disapproved of force being employed against heretics, yet he declares himself to have altered his opinion in that respect, from having observed that the laws enacted against heretics by the Emperor had wrought well in producing conversion. His arguments are as defective in force, as the cause in which they were used was unsound. One is also astonished to hear this good father maintaining an opinion so truculent and tremendous, as that infants dying before baptism, have their doom in hell,—going beyond all others, on this point, none having pronounced a more terrific judgment upon these unconsecrated babes, than their exclusion from the beatific vision, unless it be a celebrated teacher in the schools, called Gregorius Araminensis, who had the name given him of *Tormentum infantum*. It is wiser, surely, not to pass the barrier of that holy interdict which is implied in the silence of Scripture on this subject: hidden as it is among the deep

## FROM JEROM TO AUGUSTIN.

O the very reverend and blessed father Augustin, Hierom sends health in Christ. Last year I sent a letter to your grace by our brother Asterius, sub-deacon, carrying with him the ready tribute of our homage, which I assure myself was not omitted by him to be duly rendered. Now, again, by my reverend brother Presidius, the deacon, I entreat you first that you keep me in your memory; then that you will give a kind reception to the bearer of this letter, whom you will understand to be a very near relative of mine; and to whom I request you to supply whatever he may have occasion for; not that he is in any indigence (his Lord having provided for him), but what he covets most earnestly is the friendship of good men, which he regards as a benefit of the greatest value. Why he undertakes this voyage to the west you will hear best from his own mouth. We, whose lot it is to live in a monastery, are tossed about in a stormy medium, and stationary as we may seem to be, endure as many troubles as any voyager is exposed to. But we trust in him who has said, "Be of good courage, I have overcome the world," that with Him for our disposer and guide we shall be victorious over our enemy the devil. To our holy and venerable father Alipius, I beg my humble salutations. The holy brothers who zealously serve the Lord in this monastery affectionately salute you. May Christ, the Lord Almighty, keep you in health, and me in your remembrance, my truly sanctified and much to be revered father.

things of God, which no line of human thought can fathom, and into which it were profane inquisitiveness to search: it is our plain duty to put ourselves on the safe side, by doing what we are commanded to do, when we can, and if we are prevented by what is not within our control, we may rest assured that the Judge of all the earth cannot but do right.

Neither must it be concealed that this excellent person entertained a strange notion about the time taken up in the creation of the world; also respecting the nature and propensities of angels; and was one among others of the ancient fathers, whose opinion it was that the souls of departed men were kept in some dark and dreary confinement awaiting the summons of the general resurrection.

## FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

To the very reverend, &c. When I enquired of our brother Firmus after your welfare, it was with much pleasure that I received the assurance of your being safe and well. But when I was expecting, no, I will not say expecting, but rather claiming a letter from you, he told me that he left Africa without your knowing of his departure. I have charged him with my dutiful respects to you, as one who loves you with a singular attachment. At the same time I beseech you to allow for my feelings, which would not suffer me to refuse to write again to you in compliance with his earnest solicitations. But it is not I, but the cause itself, which seems to answer in its own vindication; and if my answer is in fault, allow me without offence to say, it was a much greater fault to have provoked the answer. Let there be between us a sincere and pure friendship, and then will our correspondence be a commerce of charity, not of contention. Our pious brotherhood send you their warmest greetings; and I entreat you to be the bearer of my humble salutations to those holy men, who, together with you, sustain the easy yoke of Christ, and especially to the venerable Alipius. May Christ Almighty keep you in safety, and full remembrance of me, my revered and blessed father. If you have read my commentary on Jonah, I think you will hardly maintain the ridiculous controversy about the gourd. But if the friend who first made an assault upon me with his sword, is repelled by my style, let your humanity and justice lead you to the conclusion, that not he who answers, but he who has provoked the answer is the person to be blamed. If on scriptural questions we are to meet in the field of controversy, do let us play with our weapons without inflicting pain on each other.

## AUGUSTIN TO JEROM.

To my most beloved Lord, &c. *Salutem*. Some time has now elapsed since I sent a long epistle, in answer to that one of yours which you remember to have sent by your respected son Asterius; the same who is now not only my brother, but also my colleague: which letter, whether it ever reached you, or were thought worthy of your perusal, I really do not know; unless that, indeed, by our most worthy brother Firmus you say, that if he who commenced the attack upon me with a sword, was repelled by a style, it was to be expected of my humanity and justice that I should blame the accuser, not the person defending himself by his answer. From this very slight indication only, I conjecture that you have read my said epistle. In that letter, truly I lamented that such dissension should have arisen between those whose great friendship had rejoiced every bosom alive to the blessings of fraternal amity, wherever the fame of it had been diffused. But do not imagine that there is blended with these regrets the smallest doubt of the rectitude of your conduct in this unfortunate affair, my heart being touched only with the melancholy lot of poor humanity, whose friendships cannot be sustained for a short period by the ties of mutual charity. I would fain be certified by your own hand, in answer to this letter, whether the pardon I have sought to obtain is granted to me. I wish for something more explicit from you on this head, though I cannot but infer from the more cheerful aspect of your letters, that I have obtained my object; if indeed those letters were written after the receipt of mine, which, however, is by no means made clear by their contents.

You ask, or rather in the confidence of friendship you command, that in the field of sacred literature we may amuse ourselves without giving each other any uneasiness. For my own part, I would rather discuss these things in a serious than in a playful manner. But if the word sport or play pleases you, as seeming to pledge you to little exertion, I must con-



fess myself to expect something better from a mind so powerful, benevolent, learned, zealous, liberal, matured, ingenious, and diligent as yours, the Holy Spirit not merely giving you faculties, but dictating the exercise of them, so that in great and laborious questions your help is most valuable, I will not say to him who sports upon the plain of sacred literature, but to him who presses upwards to the mountain heights with breathless ardour. But if on account of its sprightly import, you think the discussion of these questions is best expressed by the word 'ludamus' among those who are very dear to each other; whether the subject of our inquiry be plain and open, or arduous and intricate, I beseech you to instruct me how, when any thing awakens in us a particular interest, which, if not difficult of proof to the sagacious, is entirely so to such as are dull of apprehension, if, in maintaining our own opinions, we express ourselves with freedom, we shall avoid being suspected of the puerile vanity of seeking to raise our own importance by disparaging illustrious names. Let me beg of you, that when, to soften the asperity of any argument which I am compelled to use, in refuting what I deem to be erroneous, I endeavour to throw around it some conciliating language, I may not be considered as *drawing a sword smeared over with honey*. Unless, perhaps, the properer mode of avoiding the danger of giving offence by any form of argument, when one is disputing with his superior in learning, is uniformly to acquiesce in all his dicta, nor to venture upon an objection even for the sake of inquiry. Then, indeed, we may play with each other without the fear of offending, but not, or it would be wonderful, without the mischief of sporting with ourselves.

But I cannot allow Scripture to be so tampered with; for I confess to you, that all the sacred writings which are called canonical I have learned to regard with such reverence and honour, that none of those by whom they were composed have, according to my most firm belief, erred in any thing; and if I meet with any matter in those writings which appears opposed to truth, it is, I doubt not, to be imputed to a blunder

of the copier, or to an error of the translator, or to my own defective understanding of the passage. With respect to other writers, however distinguished they may be by their sanctity or learning, I do not think what they say to be true, because it has their authority to support it, but so far only as it is confirmed by canonical authors—or is supported upon strong grounds of probability. Nor do I think, my brother, that on this point you entertain an opinion at variance with mine; nor can I suppose that it is your wish, that what you write should be read with the same homage as those of the Prophets and Apostles, concerning whose writings it is impious to doubt that they are free from all error. Far be this from your pious humility, and the pure commerce you hold with your own spirit, to which is to be attributed the wish you express for that personal intercourse which would make us reciprocally teachers and learners of many good things: which, if I believe you to have said in truth and sincerity, how much more due from me must it be to believe that the Apostle Paul thought as he wrote when he expressed himself in the following terms concerning Peter and Barnabas, “When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, ‘If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?’ Of what can I be certain that it has not deceived me, if the Apostle was capable of deceiving his own children, whom he had begotten again until Christ, who is the truth, should be formed in them: to whom, when he says, ‘what I write unto you behold, before God I lie not,’ he did, nevertheless, not write truly, but deceived them by I know not what ministerial or official falsehood, in saying that he had seen Peter and Barnabas walking not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, and that he had withstood Peter to the face, for no other reason than that he had compelled the Gentiles to judaize. Is it better to believe that the Apostle Paul wrote any thing untruly, than that the Apostle Peter did any thing that was wrong? If this be so, we might say, which God

forbid ! that it is better to believe that the Gospel was untrue, than that Christ was denied by Peter : and that the book of Kings was false, than that so great a Prophet, so eminently chosen by the Lord God, coveted and committed adultery with the wife of another man, and by the slaughter of her husband added to the sin of adultery a most horrid homicide. For my own part, firmly relying on the unerring veracity of Holy Scripture, I shall always read the sacred record as verified by the highest testimony of heavenly authority ; and shall see in it the examples of men approved, corrected, or condemned, faithfully set forth, rather than suffer myself to cavil at the Divine document, because I feel it hard to credit the account of so much human depravity in persons so distinguished by their general excellence. The Manicheans, whose nefarious error stands confuted by the clearest sense of Holy Scripture, because they are unable to distort its sacred meaning into an agreement with their false opinions, are daring enough to deny its authority ; in such a way, indeed, as not directly to impute falsehood to the Apostles themselves, but to certain (who they are I know not) corrupters of the text ; when, however, they can support these assertions neither by the number and antiquity of the copies, nor by the authority or just interpretation of the language from which the interpretation into Latin has been made, they retreat from the contest overpowered by the force of simple and undeniable truth.

Is it not then obvious to your correct discernment, how much countenance is administered to the above named heretics, when we do not merely say that the apostolical writings have been falsified, but that the Apostles themselves have written falsehoods ; for you say, that it is not credible that Paul should have meant to have blamed Peter for doing what he, Paul, himself had done. I am not now inquiring what he did, but what he has written. It is most material to my argument, that the verity of the Holy Scriptures, which were given us to build up our precious faith, not by ordinary testimony, but by the Apostles themselves, and on that account to be received as entitled to our entire belief, and as standing on

the highest ground of authority, should in every part be raised above all doubt or dispute. Now if Peter did only that which it was right in him to do, Paul must have falsified the fact, when he said that he perceived him walking not according to the truth of the Gospel. If, therefore, Paul wrote truly, Peter did not walk rightly according to the truth of the Gospel. He did that which he ought not to have done. And if Paul had done something himself of the same kind, I would rather believe that he was capable of forgetting in his own practice the correction he had given to his co-apostle than suppose that he inserted a falsehood in any of his epistles, especially in one in which he had previously said, "the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." My belief, therefore, is this—that Peter did what he did, that he might induce the Gentiles to judaize; for that is what Paul wrote, whom I believe incapable of falsifying. And in that Peter acted wrongly, for it was contrary to the Gospel to say that they who believed in Christ were not safe without retaining the old ceremonies of the first dispensation. It was for this that the believing Jews of Antioch contended: whom Paul perseveringly and sharply opposed. He neither circumcised Timothy, nor performed his vow at Cenchrea, nor by the advice of James joined in the observance of the same rites with those who had vowed, to make it appear that he thought that Christian salvation depended upon any such ceremonies, but that he might not be considered as condemning those things which God had commanded to be observed by the former generation as the prefiguration of things to come, as if they were upon a footing with the idolatries of the heathens. For this is what James said to him upon that occasion,—that it had been heard of him that he taught a defection from Moses; implying that it was an impiety in the believers in Christ to be separated from the Prophet of Christ, by condemning the doctrine of which Christ himself had said, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." Attend, I beseech you, to the words of James, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they

are all zealous of the law : and they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews, which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore ? The multitude must needs come together ; for they will hear that thou art come. Do, therefore, this that we say to thee ; we have four men who have a vow on them ; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads : and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing, but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded, that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication." <sup>11</sup>

It is plain, I conceive, that James gave this advice to Paul, that the believing Jews who retained a zeal for the law might know that what they had been told concerning Paul was not true ; nor be made to think that the ministrations of Moses to their fathers were meant to be condemned as sacrilegious, and contrary to the commandments of God. These charges against Paul had not originated with those who understood with what intention these ceremonies might be observed by those believing Jews who were still zealously attached to their ancient usages, from a reverence to their divine authority and prophetic sanctity, unmixed with any belief in their power of procuring or promoting their salvation, which they knew to be revealed only through Christ, and ministered in the sacrament of baptism ; but with those who wished these ceremonies to be kept up as essential to salvation, for they well knew that Paul was a most earnest preacher of grace, teaching that, not by the works of the law men were to be justified, but by the grace of Jesus Christ, of which the law contained the types and shadows. These men, in order to stir up strife and envy against him, proclaimed him as the enemy of the law

<sup>11</sup> Acts xxi. 25.



and of the divine commandments; whose false accusations could in no way be more properly confuted than by his conforming to those very ceremonies which he was accused of denouncing as impious; shewing it to be his opinion, that neither were the Jews to be forbidden the exercise of them, as essentially wicked and criminal, nor the Gentiles to be compelled to adopt them as necessary to salvation. For if he really did denounce those ceremonies as had been reported of him, and only adopted them in the instances above mentioned, to feign regard for them, and to conceal his real sentiments, James would not have said to him, "And all will *know*, but all will *think* that what they have heard of you is false;" especially as in Jerusalem itself the Apostles had already decreed that no one should compel the Gentiles to judaize; but they had not decreed that no one should prohibit the Jews from judaizing, although the Christian doctrine by no means called upon them so to do. Moreover, if, after this decree of the Apostles, Peter practised that dissimulation in Antioch, whereby he called upon the Gentiles to adopt the customs of the Jews, which he himself was not compelled to adopt, although from respect to institutions of divine ordination, he was not interdicted from so doing, what wonder is it if Paul constrained him to declare plainly, what he had so recently concurred with the other Apostles in decreeing.

But if Peter did this, as I incline to think he did, before the said decree was pronounced at Jerusalem, it is the less to be wondered at, that Paul was desirous that he should not timidly disguise, but openly and faithfully assert what he well knew to be his real opinion; either from having conferred with him upon the subject, or because he had been divinely admonished on this question in the calling of Cornelius the centurion, or because he had been seen to eat with the Gentiles before those, of whose censures he was afraid, were come to Antioch. For we do not deny that Peter was really of the same mind with Paul in this matter. Paul, therefore, on this occasion, brought no new truth to the conscience or recollection of Peter, but convicted him of dissimulation in calling

upon the Gentiles to judaize : and the dissimulation consisted in this, that he gave his sanction to the doctrine of those who maintained that believers in Christ could not be saved without circumcision, and those other observances, which were but shadows and prefigurations of what was to come.

Paul's reason for circumcising Timothy was this—the might not appear to the Jews, and especially to his kindred on the mother's side, that circumcision was held by him with abhorrence, as worthy only of an idolatrous people; while circumcision was grounded on divine authority, and idolatry was a delusion of Satan. Titus, on the other hand, he did not circumcise, lest he should give colour to the false persuasion of those who thought that without circumcision there was no salvation, and might borrow the example of Paul to diffuse this persuasion among the Gentile converts. All this he plainly intimates in saying, "but neither Titus, who went with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised; and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the Gospel might continue with you."

Here he shews, by his omitting circumcision in one and practising it in another, the opinion he entertained of the Jewish ceremonies, as not being of obligation, nor to be rejected as impious. And, at the same time, we shew that he was careful to avoid that notion of some philosophers, who held that certain acts in a middle state, between rectitude and transgression, ascribing to them neither the qualities of the one nor of the other; while we avoid the other extreme, of holding that to observe the ceremonies of the law cannot, under all circumstances, be matter of indifference, but must be either positively good, or positively bad: so that if we prove them good, we admit our obligation to perform them; if evil, then we must believe the Apostles, in the case under consideration, not truly and faithfully, but in appearance only to have conformed to them.

But it is not the imitation of the philosophers, who pay me respect to truth in their disputations, from the imputation of which I am so desirous of defending the Apostles, as from that of the advocates of the forum, who, in their pleadings in other men's causes, allow themselves to falsify; and whose example cannot, I think, be borrowed in expounding the epistle to the Galatians, to confirm the inference of dissimulation in the Apostles in the matter of the Jewish ceremonies; but if it may, I surely need not scruple, in discussing the subject with you, to advert to the dogmas of the philosophers, who are not to be discredited as dealing altogether in falsities, but as relying upon what is in the greater part false, and who where they happen to be true, are still aliens from the grace of Him who is truth itself. But why may I not say that the sacraments which were commanded under the old dispensation are neither good, in as much as men can not be justified by them, for they only are the shadows and preunciators of the grace whereby we are justified; nor altogether bad, in as much as they were instituted by divine authority, and were suited to the seasons and occasions to which they related; more especially, too, when it is remembered that God himself declares, by the mouth of the prophet, that he has given to that people commandments which are not good: probably, if we may venture the thought, not pronouncing them bad, but only not good; that is, not such as that men could be made good by them, or would become not good without them.

I say, therefore, that circumcision, and other such things, were divinely ordained, in the prior dispensation, as a signification of the future, to be perfected by Christ Jesus; upon the coming of which future, those things remained still in the sacred record, to be perused and studied for the understanding of prophecy, but not necessary to be performed, as if we were still expecting the coming of the things so signified. These things were therefore, it is true, not to be made obligatory upon the Gentile world; and yet were they not to be so interdicted to the Jews as things to be held in abhorrence, and utterly condemned. They were intended gradually to disap-

pear before the fervent preaching of the grace of Christ, by which alone believers could be made to discern that they could not be justified or saved by these shadows, prefiguring events then future, but since arrived and present, so that in the calling of the Jews themselves, after our Lord came in the flesh, and the apostolic commission began, the use of these things were visibly superseded. Still, when we reflect how they formerly stood, commended by their import and signification, we must consider them not as things detestable, and to be shunned as we would an idolatrous practice; while to insist upon the observance of them would be wrong, lest they might come to be regarded as necessary to salvation. This some heretics have thought, who, while they have affected to be both Jews and Christians, have become neither Jews nor Christians; against whose opinions you have condescended very kindly to caution me, though I have never been in any danger of adopting them: but whose error Peter did feign, out of fear, to adopt, so that Paul with truth might affirm that he walked not rightly according to the truth of the Gospel. Paul did not so do; he only observed the old usages upon occasion, so far as to shew that they were not positively to be condemned: at the same time declaring that the faithful were saved, not by these, but by the faith that cometh of grace; lest any might suppose him to mean that these observances were necessary. And in this view it is, and under these modifications, that I am of opinion that the Apostle Paul did the things above alluded to, not with a simulating but sincere intention: and as to myself, I neither call upon, nor, indeed, allow any Jewish convert to Christianity seriously and sincerely to practise these ceremonies any more than you, who suppose Paul in these instances to have performed them deceptiously.

Am I to understand the sum of all your reasonings on this point to be no other than this—that after the Gospel of Christ was revealed, the believing Jews, in offering the sacrifices which Paul offered, in circumcising their children, in observing their sabbaths, provided they did these things pretendingly and deceptiously, did not act blameably? If this be so, we

are lapsing not into the error of the Ebionites,<sup>71</sup> or of those whom they commonly call Nazarenes, or any ancient heresy, but into I know not what new and strange opinion. But if you answer, to clear yourself from this imputation, that the Apostles were at that time to be commended for their *pretended* adoption of the ancient ceremonies, to avoid offending many of the believing Jews, who were yet weak in the faith, and did not understand that these ceremonies were to be wholly laid aside; but *now*, that the doctrine of the grace of Christ is received among so many nations that were once heathen, and confirmed among all the churches of Christ by the reading of the law and the prophets, which are to be perused for edification, and not revived in actual observances, it could answer no useful end, but would be downright madness to feign to adopt them; why may I not be allowed to say that the Apostle Paul, and other Christians of correct and pure faith, ought to be commended for having *sincerely* observed those ceremonies of the Jews, which were of prophetic significancy, and kept with so much reverence by their most pious ancestors, that they might not at once be cast off by their posterity as impious and diabolical. It is true, that when these usages, the faith which was pronounced by them being fully disclosed by the death and resurrection of the Lord, had lost their official vitality, they were properly to be considered as defunct, and calling only for decent burial, yet it was right that that burial should be marked by a real and not a pretended respect—nor was the carcase on a sudden to be abandoned to hostile contempt, and thrown, as it were, to the dogs. While, on the other hand, whosoever, even among the Jewish converts, should desire to celebrate those buried usages, by raking them from their ashes, would not be the performer of their funeral obsequies, but an impious violator of the repose of the sepulchre.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>71</sup> The Ebionites were a sect of the Hebrew converts, who circumcised, and retained the Jewish laws and customs, among their other heresies. Irenæus, lib. i. c. 26. Tertull. De Præscr. Hæret. c. 33.

<sup>72</sup> These views and reasonings of Augustin are beautifully and luminously expressed. They called, however, perhaps for something more from this great and good man on the side of caution, as it did appear that even in the fourth century, and within his own experience and observation, the Jewish ceremonies



when the gospel was first revealed. At that juncture herence to the old national usages had nothing instructive effect, but in progress of time bad consequence, unless all Christians should agree in abandon-  
ment by degrees the distinction should be lost between Moses taught his peculiar people, and the rites observed in the temples of the false deities under the influence of the  
I am really more to be blamed for my negligence, than you for the harshness of your censure. let it be considered that long before I had received you when I was writing against Faustus the Manichean, myself, though somewhat briefly, on this subject might, methinks, if you had deigned so to do, have given that explanation, or have learned from them by your letter to you, in what manner I had declared them on this point. I expect from your benevolence that you will believe me, when in the present

had more general attraction than was consistent with the purity of worship. The synagogues at Antioch, especially, made a great show of sanctity; and the pretence of curing diseases of body, by exorcisms, charms, amulets, and other mystic symbols, had a great influence on weak and unsettled minds, that many of the converts were almost seduced by them into a fatal apostasy. If the punishment by the laws of the empire restrained them from going to the temples, restraints did not prevent their adopting a middle course, in which was endeavoured to be effected between the Christian and Jewish

assure you, that it never was my opinion that even the Jewish converts ought at this time, with any intention or meaning whatever, to continue the observance of their ancient ceremonies : while with respect to Paul himself, I ever thought the same since the study of his epistles have been familiar to me ; and I presume you would not think that, at this time, it could be allowable in any one to feign the observance of those Jewish rites, though you suppose the apostle so to have acted.

Furthermore as you say, and declare with a loud voice, though the whole world should oppose you, that the ceremonies of the Jews are pernicious, and of fatal consequence to Christians ; and that whosoever, be he Jewish or Gentile convert, shall observe them, is fallen into the abyss of Satan's kingdom ; to the same opinion I do entirely assent ; and further say, that whosoever shall observe these ceremonies, whether he be of Jewish or Gentile origin, not only truly, but in *pretence*, is fallen into the said abyss : and what more will you require of me. But as you admit that the simulation practised by the apostles, at the first preaching of the new faith, could not be allowable at the present time, so do I make a similar distinction between the two periods as to the justifiableness of Paul's *sincere* observance of the same ceremonies ; deeming the same practice to deserve commendation at the one time, and reprobation at the other. So, although we read that the law and the prophets were until John the Baptist ; and that therefore the Jews sought to put Christ to death, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God,—that we have received grace for grace,—that the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ ;—and through Jeremiah the promise was given that God would make a new covenant with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant which he made with their fathers ; nevertheless I do not imagine that the Lord himself was fallaciously circumcised by his parents ; and if we say that on account of his infancy he did not prevent it ; still I cannot suppose that our Lord said fallaciously to the leper, whom certainly not the ceremony

commanded by Moses, but He himself had cleansed, "Go, and offer for thyself the sacrifice which Moses commanded for a testimony to them;" nor did he *deceptiously* go up to the feast; and that too so far from the ostentation of doing it before men, that he did not go openly, but privately. Again, the same apostle Paul said, "Behold I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ is become of no effect unto you." Did he impose then upon Timothy, and cause Christ to be of no effect unto him? or will you say that, because he did it deceptively, it produced no such consequence? this certainly was not so stated by Paul; who, without any respect to the intention with which it was done, whether for a real or deceptious purpose, said simply, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." If you wish us to think that Paul should be understood to mean, if ye be circumcised, unless it be done simulatively and deceptiously, then I think I may without hesitation, require of you to allow me to understand Paul to have intended to convey the following meaning: "If ye be circumcised, having done the same as thinking that otherwise ye could not be saved, whoever has received this rite with such hope or intention, Christ hath profited him nothing." As he plainly said in another place: "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." He then announced what you have yourself reminded me of, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." The apostle's design was to show them to be in error who imagined that they could find their justification in the law, not those who then kept up the observance of those legal ceremonies in honour of him by whom they were first ordained, well understanding the purpose for which they were instituted,—that of setting forth in types and figures truths afterwards to be revealed—and how long the maintenance of them could be permitted.

Consistently with this distinction, he says in another place, "If ye are led of the spirit, ye are not under the law." Now what is the being under the law to which the apostle affixes blame, is the great question in my judgment: for he does not seem to me to mean that those were, in an ill sense, under the

law, who merely observed the rite of circumcision, and other such outward rites which were practised by the Jews of old, but abandoned by the Christians, but who merited the censures of the moral law by not obeying its injunctions. The law says, thou shalt not covet : and this, we must admit, Christians are bound equally to observe, as it is confirmed and illustrated in the fullest manner by the gospel : which says, "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good." And immediately subjoins, "Was then that which is good, made death unto me? God forbid! but sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful," *ἵνα γενηται καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς ἡ ἁμαρτία δια τῆς ἐντολῆς*. And to the same effect, he in another place says, "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded grace did much more abound." And in another place, having before spoken of the dispensation of grace, and of its justifying efficacy, he proceeds in the way of interrogation : "Wherefore, then, serveth the law?" It was added, because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. Those, therefore, he says, are under the law, whom the law pronounces guilty, as not satisfying its requirements, while from not understanding the benefit of grace, as aiding our infirmity in obeying the commandments of God, they presume upon their own strength with a proud confidence in themselves. The fulfilment of the law is love. But the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts, not by ourselves, but by the Holy Spirit which is given to us. But to treat this subject with sufficient fulness, would be fitter for a volume than a letter. If the precept of the law—thou shalt not covet,—without the assistance of divine grace, holds a transgressor in his guilt, and gives him rather condemnation than deliverance; in as much as no power to obey is coupled with the command, how much less can we expect from circumcision, and other such outward signs, which were of necessity to be abolished, as grace came to be more fully revealed, the power of justification. These outward ceremonies, however, were not things to be shunned like the impious rites of the heathen world, even

when grace itself began to be revealed, since the revelation of grace was prefigured in these adumbrations; but were to be permitted *for a while*, to those who drew their origin from the people to whom they were given. They were afterwards, as it were, buried with honour, never more to be brought into practice by Christians.

But when you say that "these Jewish customs were not so to be laid aside, as never to be used as a means or instrument (*dispensative*), as was the opinion of our ancestors," what this notion implies, have the goodness to inform me: for either this is what I call *officiosum mendacium*, an official falsehood, (this *dispensatio* being the office or duty of honestly falsifying,) or something of which I perceive not the nature or meaning, unless, by the addition of some quality implied in the term *dispensatio*, a lie is changed in its essence and character. But if such an account of the matter be absurd, why do you then not at once say out plainly, that an official lie may be defended? unless, indeed, you are troubled about the name, inasmuch as the term *officium* does not appear to be made use of in ecclesiastical books; which, however, our honoured Ambrose was not afraid to use, who entitled some of his books abounding in useful precepts, "*De Officiis*." Is it your opinion that it is culpable to lie *officiose*, but commendable to do the same *dispensative*? Is it sometimes the part of a good man, and even of a Christian man, to deal in falsehood? to whom it hath been said, "Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: that ye fall not into condemnation;" and who hear from an authority to which they trust, "Thou shalt destroy all them that speak falsely."<sup>7</sup>

Doubtless the Apostle Paul, as a faithful dispenser of the Gospel, brings before us nothing but truth and certainty in his writings; and agreeably to this character, and this stewardship, he truly wrote that he saw Peter walking not rightly according to the truth of the Gospel, and he resisted him to his face. Peter truly received what Paul said for his correc-

<sup>7</sup> These noble remarks of Augustin conveyed much wholesome and needful instruction to Jerom, and (with reverence be it said) it gave a useful lesson to the fathers of the fourth century.



tion, and with the freedom which is the privilege of charity, with a benignant and smiling face. And thus afforded a rare and higher example to posterity not to disdain, if at any time they deviate from the path of rectitude, the rebuke of those who are below them in age and standing, than Paul, from whose example we learn that the younger is warranted, when Gospel truth is to be maintained, in resisting an elder, without an infringement of brotherly love. For although an uniform perseverance in an upright course makes the completer character, yet, as a single act of virtue, there is something more admirable and laudable in receiving correction with humility, than in reproving misconduct with boldness. While, therefore, we respect the righteous freedom of Paul, let not the sanctified submission of Peter be without the admiration it deserves. And this, in my humble judgment, was a much safer ground of defence against the calumnies of Porphyry, than to give an interpretation of the transaction alluded to between Paul and Peter that would improve his opportunity of malignantly charging the Christians with falsehood in writing their epistles, and in handling the divine ordinances. You ask of me, in terms of challenge, to mention some one authority, at least, for my opinion, since you have named so many who have preceded you in your exposition of the subject; requesting me, if I find you in error, to bear with you for the sake of those who are associated with you in that error. With those writers I must confess my entire unacquaintance; and of four of them, the total being about six or seven, you yourself have greatly lowered the authority. That Laodicean, whose name you do not give, you say has lately abandoned the church: Alexander you admit to have been an old heretic: Origen and Didymus I have found severely taken to task in your more recent works, and that too upon questions of no ordinary weight and importance; though, indeed, this same Origen had before been the theme of your admiration and praise.<sup>75</sup> But I

<sup>75</sup> This versatility of Jerom arose from that dangerous maxim adopted by some of the great divines of the fourth century, of using any authorities, and sometimes citing them incompletely, for the purposes of their present argument. Augustin was superior to the use of any such expedients.

much question whether, even in such company, you would willingly be in error; and, indeed, I rather infer, from your mode of expressing yourself, that you do not really think the persons alluded to were really in error. For who is there that would choose to be associated with any one in his mistakes?

Three only remain to you, Eusebius, Eusebius, Theodorus Heracleotes, and he whom a little afterwards is mentioned by you, John,<sup>76</sup> who lately ruled the church in the Archiepiscopal chair of Constantinople.

Moreover, if you inquire what were the sentiments of our Ambrose on this head, or of our Cyprian, you will perhaps discover that there has not been wanting to us those by whose authority we are countenanced: although, as I have already stated, I acknowledge an unqualified subjection only to the canonical scriptures,<sup>77</sup> of which I feel assured that they are chargeable with no error in opinion or statement. But should I look for some third person on my side, that I may meet your three with three of my own, one is at hand,—the apostle Paul. To him I betake myself from all who maintain another opinion; to him I make my appeal, resting upon what he tells us in his epistle to the Galatians, that he saw Peter walking not rightly according to the truth of the gospel, and that he withstood him to the face, because he compelled the Gentiles to live as did the Jews. Whether he wrote what was true, or lied after some unintelligible mode of *official falsehood*, others must determine. A little above, indeed, I hear him in the preface to his narrative, speaking thus in a solemn voice, "What I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." Let those who differ from me on this point, pardon me if I say I give greater credit to so great an apostle making this solemn adjuration in, and in behalf of, his own letters, than to what the most learned disputant may say concerning letters not his own. Nor do I regard the imputation of defending Paul, not as putting on the appearance of being, but as *being* actually in error. He neither affected to be in error, but used his liberty as an apostle, when

<sup>76</sup> Chrysostom.

<sup>77</sup> St. Augustin was constant in this sound opinion.

the time seemed to require it, giving a temporary countenance to usages originally set on foot by the providence of God for shadowing forth future dispensations ; nor was he *really* in the error of the Jews ; but on the contrary, not only knew, but earnestly and vehemently maintained that they egregiously erred who pressed those observances upon the Gentile converts, or treated them as necessary to the justification of the faithful. And when I remarked, that he became a Jew to the Jews, and a Gentile to the Gentile converts, not for the purpose of imposing upon either, but out of a tolerating sympathy ; you seem, as I have already said, not to pay due attention to my meaning, or, it might be, I did not express my meaning with sufficient perspicuity. I did not say that Paul had *pretended* an adherence to the practices of the Jews, out of a feeling for their prejudices, but that he did not dissemble in his conformity to the usages of the Jews, any more than in his similar conduct towards the Gentiles. For when I asked you why, if his becoming a Jew to the Jews consisted in his *deceptiously* adopting Jewish customs, he did not practise the same dissimulation in respect to the customs of the Gentiles, you answered that his being a Gentile to the Gentiles, consisted in his denying the necessity of circumcision, and the distinctions respecting aliments, maintained by the Jews. I would ask whether this accommodation in favour of the Gentiles, was also matter of dissimulation ? which if it would be absurd to suppose, so also would it be absurd to suppose that the liberty allowed to the Jewish ceremonies was the result either of a servile necessity, or what would be of a far less worthy character, of a deceitful policy. To the pure in heart, and to those who know the truth, as he himself testifies, unless in this also he dissembles, every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected ; but to be received with thanksgiving. Why then must Paul be *deceptious* in being a Jew to Jews, and sincere in being a Gentile to Gentiles ? why to the wild olive grafted in, was he true and sincere in his ministry, while to the natural branches he must needs have thrown over his teaching the mantle of dissimulation ? why as a Gentile to Gentiles, does he teach what

he thinks, and think what he says ; and as a Jew to Jews, harbour one thing in his heart, and utter another in his words, acts, and writings ? To both classes of persons he owed the same charity, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and a faith unfeigned. And so was he made all things to all men, that he might gain some, not by fraud, but by the leading of affection : not by consenting deceitfully to all the evil practices of men ; but by adopting the weaknesses of others, as if they were his own, and by the balm of kindness, healing the infirmities of those whose attention he had thus bespoken.

When, therefore, the Apostle allowed himself to perform the ceremonies of the Old Testament, as if they were imperative upon him, he did not out of kindness practise a deception, but, having respect to ceremonies commanded by the Lord God to be observed for a limited period, he distinguished between them and the sacrilegious usages of the Gentiles. He became a Jew to Jews, to extricate them from the error of trusting rather to a supposed saving effect of the ancient ceremonies and observances of the law, than to Christ, their true deliverer ; himself adopting their ceremonies, and putting himself in the same state of exposure to error ; manifesting by such conduct, a love to his neighbour equal to his love of himself, and his obedience to the monition to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us ; which precept our Lord declared to be at once the law and the prophets.

This compassionate sympathy is manifested by the Apostle in his epistle to the Galatians, " If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye, which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." As if he had said, put yourself on a footing with him, that you may win him : not, indeed, by committing the same fault, or feigning to be guilty of the same, but dealing with the delinquent as not forgetting how we ourselves may be overtaken, and by treating *another* with the same consideration and forbearance which *we* should look for under similar circumstances ; that is, not by feigning what was really not felt, but by acting with the sympathy which is due from one

infirm being to another. So, whether to Jew, or Gentile, or to any other fellow creature, convicted of crime or error, not feigning to be what he really was not, but knowing himself to be a man, with his liabilities to error, Paul became all things to all men, that he might gain some.

I beseech you, be pleased to look into yourself, nay, I would say, *into yourself in your relation to myself*; and recollect, or, if you have still in writing the words used by you in that letter which you sent by the hand of our brother, and now my colleague, Cyprian, let them remind you with what true, sincere, and overflowing affection, after gravely expostulating with me on a matter in which you thought yourself unjustly treated, you used these words, "In this our friendship is wounded; in this the rights of the close relation we have maintained to each other are violated; that we appear to the world to be carrying on a puerile dispute, and to be supplying matter of contention for our respective partisans." These words were not only, I well know, the genuine dictates of the mind, but of a mind consulting most benevolently the feelings of him to whom they were addressed. You then add, what, indeed, had you been silent upon it, would have been sufficiently apparent, "These things I write, because I desire to love you with a true Christian affection, nor to reserve in my bosom any thing to which I give not utterance." O holy and reverend man, and (as God knows, who sees my soul) loved by me with a true heart, that which you have thus set forth in your letter, and which I doubt not has exhibited you to me such as you really are, is that which the Apostle Paul hath also set forth in his letter, not to any one man, but to the Jews and Greeks, and to all the Gentiles begotten by him in the Gospel, and with whom he was still in travail, and to all the succeeding thousands of faithful Christians, to whom that epistle was to carry his memory—that nothing was retained in his bosom contrary to that which passed his lips. As he was made all things to all men, so you have made yourself the same with me, not deceptively, but by a true feeling of sympathy; when, thinking me in fault, you have



determined not to abandon me to my error, but have acted towards me as you would have wished me to have done towards yourself, in similar circumstances. Full of thanks to you for these benevolent sentiments towards me, I venture at the same time to beseech you not to take it amiss, if, when some remarks occur to me on passages in your smaller works, I make them known to you; being desirous that all persons would use the same freedom with me, which I have maintained towards you; that whatever they deem reprehensible in my writings, they would not bestow upon it an insidious praise, nor make it the subject of their censure before others, without communicating it to me; since, by such conduct, I do indeed think that *friendship is wounded, and the rights of a close relation violated*. I know not whether those can be reckoned among Christian friendships in which is evidenced the vulgar proverb, 'Flattery begets friends, and truth engenders hate,' rather than the maxim of the church, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." And truly my opinion is, that we should do well to impress most earnestly upon our dearest friends, and those most disposed to look with partiality upon our labours, that fault may be found by one of the other without any diminution of mutual regard; and that it is not the natural effect of truth, which is really the debt of friendship, to promote discord, whether it be truth contained in the contradiction itself, or in the motives and convictions of the person from whom the contradiction comes, so long as his heart and lips are in accordance. I hope, therefore, our brothers, who are of your familiar acquaintance, will believe that it happened against my will, and, indeed, to my no small vexation, that my letter found its way into the hands of many persons before it reached you, to whom it was addressed. How that happened it would be long to explain, and as I conceive unnecessary, since it ought to suffice, if I am to be credited, that it did not happen with the intention imputed, nor with my will, consent, or privity. If that which I say, the truth whereof I call God to witness, is not believed, I know not what I can more do.

Far be it from my mind to suspect that the persons alluded to have, out of any malevolence towards me, intimated to you any such suspicions to my prejudice, with a view to stir up strife between us, which may the mercy of the Lord our God avert from us; but, without imputing to any the design to injure me, I cannot but be aware how prone we are to suspicion, from a consciousness of our own infirmity. It is but just that I should think this of them, if indeed they are vessels of Christ, made for honour, and appointed by God for a good purpose in a great house. But if, after this my solemn assertion, and their knowledge of it, they will persevere in their injurious surmises concerning me, how wrongly they act you are my witness. When I said that I had not sent any book to Rome, written against you, I meant, in the first place, to distinguish what is properly a book from a letter, about which I had reason to think you had received some, I know not what, wrong impression; neither had I sent that epistle to Rome, but to you; and as to its being written against you, I could not regard it in that light, as I was conscious of having written it from motives of the sincerest friendship, for your or rather for our mutual admonition and correction. Putting aside, then, those by whom you are surrounded, I beseech you, by the grace by which we have been redeemed, that, in those instances in which I have made mention in my letter of those high qualities with which it has pleased God to endow you, I may not be suspected of an insidious flattery. But if, in any respect, I have given you offence, forgive me. And I beg you will not take, in a larger sense than it was meant, something which from one, I forget which, of the poets, rather absurdly, perhaps, than with scholar-like correctness, I cited in allusion to you; especially as, you will remember, I immediately subjoined, that I did not mean to imply by it a wish that you might recover the eyes of your understanding, but that you would direct to the object, in relation to which the passage was quoted, those sound and correct eyes which happily belonged to you. The allusion to Steasichorus was made by me, not in reference to his blindness, which I neither attributed to

you, nor apprehended in your case, but in imitation of his palinode, or recantation, if I had written anything which I ought to have cancelled in a subsequent writing. And I beg that, from time to time, you will correct me without reserve when you shall perceive an occasion for so doing: for though, according to the import of words expressive of rank and dignity in the Church, settled by ecclesiastical usage, the title of Bishop is superior to that of Presbyter, nevertheless, in numerous particulars, Augustin must take a lower grade than Jerom; and yet correction even from an inferior, is not to be refused and disdained.

With respect to your translation, you have convinced me of the benefit to be derived from a translation of the Scriptures from the Hebrew, that you may bring before us what the Jews have pretermitted or corrupted. But I request to be informed by what Jews you consider this to have been done;—whether by those who translated the Scriptures before the coming of our Lord, and if so, by whom in particular? or by those who, after our Lord's advent, might be suspected on that account to have subtracted some things from the Greek copies, or of having corrupted them, to avoid being convicted by their testimony: a motive by which I do not see how those who lived anterior to our Lord's appearance on earth could have been actuated. I pray you, send me your translation from the Septuagint, which I was not aware you had yet given to the world. The book also of which you make mention, touching the best method of translating, I am desirous of reading; and hope to learn from it how a translator's skill in languages may keep pace with the conjectures of the critics in sacred literature, who, with the most harmonious agreement in faith and doctrine, must, in the obscurity which so frequently meets them in the pages of Scripture, be perpetually generating new opinions, although this variety may not affect the substance of our belief and trust. And, indeed, the same commentator, with an unvarying faith, may, at different times, expound the same text differently, as his impressions may alter of the sense of an obscure passage.

But my prevailing reason for wishing for your Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint was, my anxiety to preclude the interference of the presumptuous ignorance of others, too promptly disposed to the same undertaking. Let those who suspect me of envying your useful labours, if possible, be made to understand that my objection to the reading of your translation from the Hebrew in our churches, arises from the reluctance I feel to disturb the Christian community by reflections cast upon the authority of the Septuagint, to which their ears and understandings have been so long accustomed, and to which the Apostles have given their sanction. With the same feeling of reluctance to disturb settled impressions, I would rather read that shrub mentioned in Jonah as it is interpreted by the Seventy—a gourd, than understand it according to the Hebrew text, neither as ivy nor a gourd, but as something else, I know not what, which, dependant on its own stem, rises erect without prop or support. I cannot think the Seventy would have adopted the name of gourd, unless they had known that something similar to this was meant in the original.

And now, I think, I have written enough, and more than enough, in answer to your three letters, with two of which I was favoured by Cyprian, and one by Firmus. Write again whatever you think will be instructive to myself or others. I will, in future, use greater care that the letters which I write to you, may be delivered to you, before they are put into any hands by which they may be liable to be spread abroad: for I confess that I should not wish that mine to you, should be so dealt with, any more than yours to me, of which, with the greatest reason, you complain of the dispersion. I trust that mutual kindness, as well as the liberty which belongs to friendship, will induce us both, without reserve, to impart to each other whatever may occur to us concerning our respective letters, and that with such a disposition of mind as may, in the commerce of friendship, be not displeasing to God. But if you think that this cannot be done without the danger of exciting feelings destructive of our mutual affection, let it not

be done. The love subsisting between us is greater than to be subject to this peril; but if it must be less than this, yet surely that less degree of love is better than no love at all.

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It has been thought desirable to include, within the limits of this work, some of the most interesting epistles of the fathers of the Christian church living in the fourth and fifth centuries, since in this last stage of ancient literature, all that could qualify for elegant letter-writing had gone over, with the remains of scholarship, to the ecclesiastical body. The letters of Symmachus and Ausonius might, indeed, have been greatly multiplied; but it will probably appear, to those who value letters as the carriers in the commerce of intelligence between mind and mind, that the production of a few of these specimens was enough to satisfy literary curiosity. They are, however, to this limited extent, extremely interesting, as bearing upon them the impress of a period of transition, when society and manners were undergoing a great transformation, and the vast structure, cemented by the habits of centuries, established on prescription and antiquity, and having all the prejudices and propensities of nature for its buttresses and supports, was in a rapid course of dilapidation and dispersion. The fourth and fifth centuries belong especially to the history of the Church. No correspondence by letters could be looked for, in a period so convulsed and barbarous, having reference to any permanent interests except those connected with the state and progress of religion. All else was fluctuating with the changes and chances of physical force, amidst ignorance of political rights and moral duties. Making due allowance for the nearness with which revolutionary events are brought to each other in the distant scenery which history presents to us, all testimony does so conspire to prove the degenerate condition of morality and intelligence in this last chapter of Roman greatness, that we cannot doubt of the deterioration into which all things belonging to mind and its energies had col-



lapsed. The momentum of the empire seemed to be tending downwards by a sort of gravitation; and it would be difficult to shew what it specifically was that thus irresistibly urged it onward in this fatal direction, with a system of laws matured by antiquity and experience, and a new dispensation so calculated to elevate and correct the intercourse of life.

In the moral as in the natural economy, the hand of Providence works imperceptibly and mysteriously; and one is ready sometimes to think that, as the great Disposer has given to the material frame of the individual man, first a tendency to grow to perfection, and then a contrary tendency to decay and dissolve, the turning-point being in His invisible hand; so he may have set certain bounds to national increase; thus giving to everything in this preparatory world the same flux and revolutionary character. The struggles of rising states may elicit the powers of the mind, but the commotions which agitate a nation's old age have no such effect. They kindle no flame, they awaken no dormant energies, they teem with no products of glory; ungenerous strifes, and covetous contention, is all they provoke or call into action; and thus it was with antiquated Rome in the miserable years of its tardy declension. Its degradation had reached its lowest depression at the beginning of the fifth century; and in that sunken and hopeless extremity, it lingered on to its final extinction in A. D. 476, when the grasp of Odoacer put it out of its misery. During this interval the city was three times besieged, once sacked and pillaged by Alaric and his Goths, and once again by Genseric and his Vandals; while all its fairest provinces were laid waste by Attila and his Huns. Imperial Rome no more looked down from her seven hills upon a trembling world. She slowly expired amidst the mockeries of her nominal majesty, the Goth being her real master; and if a gleam of her departed greatness was reflected in the person of Majorian, it was only to aggravate the gloom into which the eternal city was sinking. The Decii, the Fabii, the Africani, the Cornelii, had dwindled down to a Maximus, an Avitus, a Severus, an Anthemius, an Olybrius, a Glycerius, a Nepos,

and an Augustulus. The staple of her destiny was reduced to its last thread in that concluding list of princes who followed her glory to its grave.

In such a state of things, it was not to be expected that an intelligent, gay, or instructive correspondence by letters should be found to keep the charities or festivities of domestic life an exercise or play, or to carry on the pleasing commerce of literary intercourse. Everything belonging to mind must needs have been in a condition of great weakness. A sort of grey puerility, or what, in homely phrase, is called second childhood, was characteristic of all the literature of these times. The Roman language suffered much under this contagious dulness. It became stuffed with foreign and bombastical combinations, unidiomatic, anomalous, and impure. Being used only as the organ of bad taste and poor conceptions, it lost, by degrees, its masculine and indigenous strength, and sunk to the level of the service in which it was employed.

Caius Sollius Sidonius Apollinarius, a native of that part of Gaul through which the Rhone passes, called in ancient geography *Gallia Lugdunensis*, was a man of letters and some poetical talent; and, having been the panegyrist of three Emperors, Avitus, Majorian, and Anthemius, in no measured terms of praise, he floated in safety and tranquillity along the turbid stream of those unsettled times. He became bishop of Arverne (now Auvergne), of which the episcopal city was Clermont; and, unlike Paulinus of Nola, who made poetry give place to his holy avocations, on his conversion to Christianity, he is only known to posterity by his poetical and literary performances. He was but a frigid versifier, and in his epistles, which have come to us, he has distinguished himself by bolder innovations in the use of language than most others of his time.<sup>78</sup> His encomium of the Emperor Anthemius was so acceptable to that prince, that the statue of the poet was placed, by his order, in the forum of Trajan, with a laurel

<sup>78</sup> In quibus, multa inveniat latine lingue studiosus nullo modo imitanda, verba audacter novata, aut insolenter deducta, phrasesque inconditas, et a latina gravitate longe abhorrentes. Flacc. *Tot. Lat. in verb.*

crown. The poetical priest was the son-in-law of Avitus, an interesting portion of whose private life had, according to the flattering testimony of Sidonius, been passed in studious repose at an estate which he possessed in the neighbourhood of Clermont. This summer residence appears to have been a retreat well adapted to the cultivated tastes of Avitus, who is represented, at least before his elevation to the purple, to have had a great relish for rural sports, elegant reading, and the practice of husbandry. Avitus was drawn from his retirement by his appointment to the post of Master-General of the Cavalry, and Infantry of Gaul, in which character he successfully courted the favour and support of Theodoric, King of the Goths, at that juncture the arbiter of the fortunes of the empire, and residing with his court at Thoulouse. Thither Avitus repaired, and while he was forming a secret alliance with this powerful friend, the death of Maximus opened his way, with the assistance of Theodoric, to the throne of the Roman empire, to which he was, without resistance, advanced. On this change in the condition of Avitus, he left his rural sojourn, and Sidonius, as the husband of his daughter Papianilla, appears to have become its possessor. With this villa he was extremely pleased. He called it *Avitacum*, after the name of his father-in-law, to whose care and cultivation it owed its attractions; and it is thus that, after the manner, and probably in imitation, of the younger Pliny, he describes it to a friend.

## SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND DOMITIUS.

You complain that I loiter in the country: but surely I have more reason to complain that you linger in town at this season. Now the spring is giving way to summer; and the sun, ascending through its higher steps, is travelling in its radiance towards the northern pole. What shall I report of our climate here, which has been stretched out by the Divine Artificer towards the west, the region of vapours. The world here has now begun to glow with summer heat. The mountains no more present their snowy tops; and the surface of the plains

is inscribed with curvatures and gaping fissures, caused by the heat. The beds of the rivers begin to show themselves; their muddy banks appear; the dust has taken place of the grass in the fields; and the brooks sleep in their channels. The water is not merely warm; it boils. And now while one is dissolved in woollen, and another in silk, you under your shaggy cloak banded about you, wedged into your official chair, are surrounded by your scholars, pallid no less from the heat, than from trepidation, while you commence your lectures to your gaping audience. But, my good friend, unless your taste is depraved, hurry away from the suffocating allies of the city, and accepting the hospitality now offered you, shun the influence of the dog-star, by repairing to this most agreeable retreat. But perhaps, you would wish to know to what sort of a place you are invited. Hear, then, my description of it. I am at Avitacum; this is the name of my farm: which, because it is the name of my wife's family, is more agreeable to me than my own family name; such is the harmony in which we live together<sup>79</sup> by the favour of providence, unless you suspect there is some witchery in it. On the western side, a mountain stands out to view, not piercing the clouds, but yet lofty. It seems to have engendered the smaller hills about it from the fiery contents of its two craters, and which cover a breadth of about four acres from its base. But while there is a sufficient area before the house, the sides of the hills are carried in straight declivities into the middle of the valley; quite to the verge of the dwelling house, which has its frontage turned towards the north and east. A spacious bath is on the southern side, lying at the base of a rocky eminence covered with a wood, so that when the trees are felled, the timber tumbles spontaneously into the mouth of the furnace, supplying charcoal for heating the bath; the flues being placed in an apartment which is of about the same area with the chambers for perfuming and anointing, except that a semi-

<sup>79</sup> This good bishop was not more disposed to part with his wife in obedience to the discipline of the church, than Synesius, or Paulinus.

circular seat occupies a large portion of this latter room, through the walls of which, the boiling water is carried in leaden pipes, hissing, and, as it were, sobbing in its passage.

This apartment is so shut up, that, although the light is fully admitted, there is hardly a consciousness of nudity, enough to excite an emotion of shame in minds the most delicate. Hence a door opens into the frigidarium, or cooling apartment, and the cold bath, which is a humble imitation of the baths constructed for the public use. It has its roof conically elevated to an apex, with its four sides shelving down in an imbricated fashion from its crest. The room assigned to this purpose is an exact square, so that, leaving space enough for the services of the attendants, it may hold the number of seats required for the accommodation of the visitors coming from the hot bath.<sup>80</sup> The builder has placed opposite each other two windows, at the terminations of the sloping roof, so that a view is afforded of the skilfully wrought ceiling. The cement of which the exterior of the walls is made, presents a smooth and shining surface. There are no paintings of figures representing impure stories, which, whatever testimony they may bear to the power of the art, are a disgrace to the artist. Here are no buffooneries of dress or countenance, patched and coloured like the wardrobe of the farce-writer Philistio.<sup>81</sup> Here are no wrestlers and boxers with their bent and twisted limbs, whose indecent contortions the corrective rod<sup>82</sup> of the master

<sup>80</sup> Tot possit recipere sellas Quot soli sigma personas. The sigma in this place does not signify a circular seat, as it generally does, but the semicircular shape of the floor of the hot bath, from which persons, who had been using it, came to the cold bath. The number of seats was accommodated to the number of the persons who had been in the hot bath. In balneis qui lavabant a cella caldaria, ejusque solio transibant ad frigidarium, ibique in sellis condebant.

<sup>81</sup> Philistionis. Poetæ mimographi γελωτοποιον, ipso in risu mortui, ut refert Suidas. Euseb. in Chron. sub Tiberio. He was a mimic or buffoon, born in Magnesia, and a distinguished performer at Rome.

<sup>82</sup> Virga. βατων γυμνασιάρχος. It was a rod used by the managers of the combats and contests in the circus or stadium, for regulating and controlling the proceedings. More properly expressed by the Latin rudis, and the Greek ραβδος.



of the sports would put a stop to in real exhibitions. What more on this head need be added? nothing will be found represented on these walls unfit to meet the eye of purity. A few verses will arrest the casual reader, by no means of an improper character; which to have read one would not regret, but which excite no wish for a re-perusal.

If you inquire after marbles; it is true that neither Paros, nor Carystos, nor Proconnesos,<sup>63</sup> nor the Phrigians, nor the Numidians, nor the Spartans, have furnished their variegated facings; nor coloured with the dye of the genuine conchylum, does the floor glitter with the marble dust; and yet without the coolness borrowed from foreign quarries, our humble cottages have in their own shade a sufficient protection from the summer heat.

But listen, while I recount to you what we possess of comfort, rather than the things in which we are deficient. To this, our mansion, a spacious piscina or pool, or if you prefer a Greek term, a baptisterium or bath, is annexed, containing about twenty thousand modii. To such as have been washed in the warm bath, a triple passage is afforded hither through the partition wall by a vaulted access, not merely piles of stones,<sup>64</sup> but columns being interposed, such as the architects regard as the stately ornaments of an edifice.<sup>65</sup> Six pipes, standing out with heads to imitate lions, pour the river, which comes down from the mountain's brow, by winding channels down its sides, into the basin or pool above mentioned; which lions' heads present to those that come suddenly upon them the exact teeth of the animals, their furious aspects, and an imposing resemblance of their manes. In this place, the crowd

<sup>63</sup> Προκοννησος. An Island in the Ægean Sea, celebrated for its marble quarries. Strab. l. xii.

<sup>64</sup> Medii pilæ. He is supposed to mean pillars composed of many stones made circular planes, and put one upon another.

<sup>65</sup> Edificiorum purpuras—i. e. ornamenta. The word purple, by ancient writers, is sometimes used in the general sense of ornamental.—“Quos numquam cum quibus tanquam purpuram misceri oporteat. Sic in Orat. ‘Ὅ δὲ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ καλλίετος, φωτός τε πολλοῦ ἀναμίτος, καὶ ὡς πορφύρῃ δεικνυμένονος. Lucian in Hipp.

of domestics or guests surrounding the master of the mansion, being prevented by the noise of the falling waters from making themselves heard by an ordinary exertion of the voice, apply their mouths close to each other's ears; and thus the mere common chit-chat has the ridiculous appearance of being communicated as profound secrets. To those who are coming from the bath, the apartment belonging to the mistress of the mansion presents itself, in a line with the store-room or pantry, which is divided by a thin moveable partition from the chamber, wherein the works of embroidery and the loom are carried on. Towards the east, the portico looks upon the lake, which portico is supported by rounded piles, rather than with proud columns. From the vestibule, the long covered entrance lets the eye into the interior, uninterrupted by walls or partitions, which, as it looks upon nothing, although we must not call it a hypodrome,<sup>66</sup> has a full claim to be called a crypto-porticus, or covered way. This opening at its extremity into a corridore or open gallery, affords a refreshing coolness; when the preparation and covering of the sleeping couches is completed, then a most noisy chorus takes place among the nurses and female attendants, while I and my family proceed along the dormitory. From the covered way you pass to the winter apartment, discoloured by the smoke of the fire, in the arched chimney-place often excited by the application of the bellows. But why talk of this to you, as you are not now invited to make one, round a fire. Let us speak rather of what more appertains to you and the season. From this chamber we proceed to the dining and supping room, which opens entirely upon the lake, and from which, the lake is almost wholly seen. In this room there

<sup>66</sup> The hypodromus is to be distinguished from the hippodromus; which is a circus for chariot and horse-racing. The word is here, doubtless, borrowed from Pliny the younger, who uses it in the famous letter in which he describes his Coman villa, and which will be found among his letters in its place in this volume. The term is used to signify a sort of natural portico formed of the branches of trees and shrubs trained to meet. It was a place for walking and conversing in undisturbed. "Dant secessum vicina secreta, ubi dum erratici palmitum lapsus nexibus pendulis per arundines bagulas repunt, viteam porticum frondea tecta fecerunt." *Cypr. Epist. ad Donatum.*

is a dining table, and a polished sideboard ; to the area or floor of which apartment there is a gradual ascent by broad and easy steps ; where, in the intervals of your repast, you may enjoy the prospect. If any thing is brought to you boiled in the water of this most noisy of fountains, you will see spread over the inner surface of your cups spots of snowy whiteness, and a greasy vapour obscuring their transparency as the liquor cools, which is almost immediately. The cold contents of these cups must not be swallowed at a draught by a thirsty man, though to you, who are so abstemious, such caution may not be necessary.

Hence you may watch the fisherman launching his boat into the water, that he may spread out his nets on the surface, suspended by corks, or stretched out and fastened to fixed posts, at certain distances. It is amusing to see, on a nightly excursion on the lake, the rapacious trout ensnared by the little fish of their own kindred. What can be more fitting than that these greedy animals should be made to ensnare one another. The repast being over, the withdrawing-room receives us, which, being the coolest, is the fittest for summer ; for it admits a full light without heat, having a north aspect ; a very narrow slip being interposed, where couches are placed for light and refreshing slumbers. Here, how pleasantly sounds the chirrup of the grasshoppers, in full chorus in the noon-tide of summer ; the frogs croaking as the evening advances ; the swans and geese proclaiming bed time with their shrill notes ; the crowing cocks anticipating the morning light ; philomel whispering among the shrubs the approach of the dawn ; and the swallow chattering among the sparrows. To which harmony you may add the shepherd's pipe, with which the night-watching Tityrus's of our mountains contend with each other, surrounded by their flocks, browsing on the greensward with their sounding bells ; all which various melodies of sound and song will bring on, with their soothing influence, a deep and refreshing sleep.

If you take your walk towards the harbour, along the verdant lawn, you come to a public grove at no great distance, made by two large lime trees, forming one umbrageous canopy with their

spreading but united branches, under whose shade, when my friend Ecdicius honours me with a visit, we amuse ourselves with the ball; and this is continued till the sun, being at a greater height, confines the shade to the area between the trees, and then, too tired for the exercise of the pila, we go to the dice-board.

So much for my house, which I have in description rebuilt for your entertainment; but I must acquit myself as to the lake: so take the remainder. It is situated towards the east; and when its waters are agitated and impelled by a strong wind, it almost washes the basement of the building; while its shores present such a morass with its alluvial mud, as to forbid a near approach. A bank of clay is thus formed round the lake, which presents a moving scene of gliding barks, when the weather permits these excursions. When the south wind blows, the waters become very rough; and the leaves of the surrounding trees are scattered over the noisy surface, which is in extent about seventy stadia. A river finds its way into the lake, but at its place of entrance it is so tossed about by the rocky obstructions which it has to contend with, that it rushes forward frothy and foaming, till it is buried in the lake. Whether it was only an increment to the lake, or the source and origin of it, may be a question; but it is certain that it passes through it, impelled along a channel at the bottom, to the advantage it may be, of the lake, but to the injury of the fish; for the fish thrown back, and, as it were, imprisoned by the eddies, appear with those hues which indicate sickness: having neither regress nor egress, their bodies become gross, and serve as a sort of living and portable prison. The shore of the lake towards the right is indented, incurvated, and well timbered; towards the left it is open, green, and level. The water has a deep green colour along the shore, to the south, caused by the overhanging boughs of trees, which stretch far over the surface of the lake, as the lake itself covers its gravelly bed, so the shade of the trees cover the water. The same colour is continued along the western rim. Towards the north, the appearance is what might be expected from its aspect.

Towards the west, a plebian sort of shrub, wild and scattered, grows along the shore; bent down in many places by the weight of the little boats passing over it. Around this shrub, the pliant curls of the rushes are entwined, while the thick leaves of the sedge swim about; and the bitter quality of the grey willow is nourished by waters which are in themselves entirely sweet.

In the middle of the lake there is a small island, where upon a rude pile of stones there stands out to view a goal or terminus, indented by the strokes of oars, and worn by the boats sailing close up to it and about it, where many a merry shipwreck takes place: for it was the custom there for our ancestors to imitate the Drepanitanian contest according to the Trojan superstition.<sup>67</sup>

Then the territory itself, though this should have been spoken of before, is abounding in wood, painted with flowery meads, with plenty of pasture for cattle, and many shepherds feeding their own flocks upon it. But I will delay you no longer, lest if I carry this description to a greater length, the autumn will come and find you still reading it. Be but quick in coming to me, you will not be in haste to leave me when you are once here; and I am sure you will pardon me for having studied so little the brevity due to you in this unconscionably long epistle, which carries you to every hole and corner of this country residence of mine; but which, long as it is, has left many things untouched, for fear of becoming tedious. Wherefore, I trust that a good judge, and wise reader will pronounce not the page which describes, but the villa which is described, to be a thing of magnitude.

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The above letter of Sidonius must be regarded as very curious, as far as it affords an insight into the domestic ar-

<sup>67</sup> Depranum, now Trapani, was a maritime town on the western coast of Sicily, near the promontory of Lilybæum, where Æneas lost his father Anchises, to the memory of whom he celebrated funeral games. We are to understand the allusion to be to the Ludicra Naumachia.



rangements and habits of a period in history, with which we are very imperfectly acquainted. Of his manner of disposing of his time he gives us no intimations; but as he was a man of literature, and poetry, he probably imitated the younger Pliny, as much in the economy of his time, as in the distribution of his house and grounds. The situation of this Villa of Sidonius has been always a very doubtful question. Some have supposed it to have stood on the banks of the lake of Chambon. And the Chateau de Varennes, now in ruins, has been thought, not on improbable grounds, to cover the spot where the Avitacum was once gay with the hospitality of Sidonius and the festivities of his friends. The scene from this commanding situation is represented as extremely beautiful; and seems to answer, in many respects, to the description given by Sidonius of his agreeable residence.

The letter of Sidonius containing a description of the person and manners of Theodoric, King of the Visigoths, is curious and entertaining. It is dated from the Court of Thoulouse, where Theodoric had fixed the seat of his government. It was written, as appears to Agricola, who we learn from the twelfth of his Epistles in the Second Book, was his wife's brother.

SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND AGRICOLA, SENDS HEALTH.

You have often asked me, since common report speaks so advantageously of the character and manners of Theodoric, King of the Goths, to give you a letter descriptive of the man, in his person and in his mode of living. I willingly comply with your wishes as far as it can be done within the compass of a letter, while I cannot but commend the anxiety you feel on a subject of so much interest. For he is a man like ourselves, and worthy to be known and studied by those who have not the opportunity of an intercourse with him. The Providence of the great Disposer has associated in his person the gifts which constitute complete felicity;—manners of such a stamp and character, notwithstanding his exalted situation, as to force envy itself to praise him. If you wish to know what his figure

is,—he is exactly proportioned, above the middle size, and yet shorter than the very tall. The top of his head is well rounded, and the hair, somewhat retreating from his broad smooth forehead, curls carelessly about the top. His eye-brows are arched and shaggy; and when he bends his brows his eye-lashes almost touch his cheeks. His ears, as the custom of his nation is, are covered with his hair. When he opens his mouth, his teeth attract your attention by their snowy whiteness. His nose has the finest curvature. His lips are thin and even. His beard grows high to his very temples, but from the lower part of his face the tonsor is constantly plucking out the hairs. His chin, throat, and neck, are not fat, but full and fleshy. His fair complexion is often suffused with a juvenile redness, not from anger, but real modesty. His shoulders are well rounded off; his arm above the elbow stout, and below the elbow strong and sinewy, his hands large, his lower limbs are muscular and firmly set.

If you desire to know how he daily demeans himself in public. Before break of day he attends the services of his chaplains with a very small retinue; he is constant in his devotions, though (let this be a secret between us) one may see that he carries himself thus devoutly rather from regard to custom and usage, than from sincere motives. The remainder of the morning he dedicates to the affairs of his government; his armed attendant stands near his seat; and his troop of guards is admitted so near, as to be at hand; but to avoid noise they are posted on the outside. They stand in the entrance hall or ante-chamber, and are not suffered to come within the curtains which conceal the council room. At these times the embassies from the nations are introduced. He listens much, answers sparingly. Matters which require further consideration he delays; such as require dispatch, he expedites. About the second hour (eight o'clock) he rises from his throne, either to pass some time in inspecting his treasures, or his stables. If his intention to hunt is announced, he goes forth, a boy carrying his bow, for he deems it below the royal dignity to carry a bow at his side. If a bird or wild

beast is pointed out to him, the boy places the bow in his hand which he puts behind to receive it unbent ; for he considers it to be childish to bear a quiver, and effeminate to receive the bow ready bent for him. He then bends the bow, shoots at whatever you please, and is pretty sure of his aim. When he goes to his repast, which he takes as a private man on common days, no servant, panting under his load, places upon the table almost giving away to the pressure, the heaps of pale unpolished silver plate. The greatest weight is in the words uttered ; for here either nothing is related, or only what is worthy of attention.

A furniture of embossed silver, and splendid tapestry, sometimes dyed in purple, sometimes made of fine flax, is produced ; viands are preferred not for their costliness, but for their being skilfully prepared ; the service of dishes for their brightness, rather than their splendour ; and the infrequent handing about of the cups and goblets, it would be easier for thirst to condemn, than for temperance to excuse. You may see at these entertainments Greek elegance, Gallic abundance, Italian alertness and precision, public pomp, private assiduity, and royal discipline. The luxury of his entertainments on festive days is too well known to need a description. After dinner Theodoric sometimes indulges himself in a short slumber, but often omits it ; and as soon as he wakes, he calls hastily for the dice and tables, encourages his friends to forget the royal majesty,<sup>88</sup> and is delighted when they freely express the feelings which are excited by the incidents of play. At this game, which he loves as the image of war, he alternately displays his eagerness, his skill, his patience, and his cheerful temper. If he loses, he laughs ; he is modest and silent if he wins. Yet, notwithstanding this seeming indifference, his courtiers choose the moments of his victory as the best times for asking any favour ; and I myself, in my applications to the King, have derived some benefit from my defeats.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88</sup> The writer is so tediously minute, that I have followed Mr. Gibbon in his free translation.

<sup>89</sup> Tum etiam ego aliquid obsecraturus feliciter vincor, et mihi tabula perit,

About the ninth hour (three o'clock) the tide of business again returns, and flows incessantly till after sun-set, when the signal of the royal supper dismisses the weary crowd of suppliants and pleaders. At the supper, a more familiar repast, buffoons and pantomimes are sometimes introduced, to divert, not to offend, the company, by their absurd jests: but female singers, and the soft and effeminate kinds of music are severely excluded; such martial tunes as animate the soul to deeds of valour are alone grateful to the ear of Theodone. He retires from table, and the nocturnal guards are immediately posted at the entrance of the treasury, the palace, and the private apartments.

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As the manners and habits of the last days of Rome in the West are but very obscurely known, one more letter from the pen of Sidonius, extended as this Volume has become in the necessary execution of its plan, shall be exhibited. It is the more curious, as shewing the habits of a bishop of the latter half of the fifth century of the Christian æra; which bishop is one of the constellation of those great Ecclesiastics which are presented to us in the collection, distinguished by the name of *Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*. It is a letter to a respectable correspondent of Sidonius, supposed to be a citizen of Arverne; and written at the Villa of Apollinaris and Ferreolus, two of his intimate friends.

#### SIDONIUS TO DONIDIUS.

You ask why, having set out on my visit so long ago to Nemausus, I lengthen your regret by so long an absence. I now give you the reasons for my delaying my return so long, which it gives me pleasure to relate, because I know that the

*ut causa salvetur.* The discipline of the church must at this time have sat easy upon the clergy, for a bishop to be thus publicly engaged with the dice-box.

things which give me pleasure give you pleasure also. In this most delightful country I have passed a time of the greatest enjoyment with my most kind and polite friends, Ferreolus and Apollinaris. Their farms adjoin, and their houses are so near together as to be hardly far enough for a ride, though the distance is too fatiguing for a walk. The acclivities about them are laid out in vineyards, and olive-gardens; you might think them to be Aracynthus and Nysa, celebrated in song. From one of these houses you have a prospect of an extensive champagne country, from the other you look upon groves and plantations. But though these Villas are of a different character, they are equally delightful. But why enlarge upon the site of these Villas, when I have so much to say upon the kind hospitality which reigns within them. It being our first visit, we sent forward some very expert explorers of the way, who might secure our retreat, for each of these houses were situated not only deep in the tracks behind public embankments, but among paths, which to shorten the distance had been rendered intricate, and by roads leading through the pasture, lest we might be intercepted by the snares laid for us by our friends to prevent our return. Into some of their snares, I confess, we did in part fall, but not against our will, for scarcely had we got footing in the house, when we were compelled to take an oath that we would not think of leaving it to continue our journey, before the expiration of seven days from our arrival. On the morning of each day there was an agreeable contention between our hosts, whose kitchen should first begin to smoke with the nice things to be prepared for us. Nor truly could the turns in this respect be easily settled upon a just scale and division, although, it is true, I was connected by the ties of propinquity with one family, while those who were with me had a similar connexion with the other. For on Ferreolus, a man of præfectorian rank, in addition to his claim of relationship, age and station seemed to confer the priority in exercising the rights of hospitality. Thus we were hurried from one luxurious entertainment to another. Hardly had we passed the threshold, when, be-



hold, regular matches of tennis-players, within the rings or circular enclosures, and the frequent noise and rattling of the dice, with the clamours of the players! In another part were placed such an abundance of books ready for use, that you might suppose yourself in the libraries of the grammarians, or among the benches of the Roman Athenæum,<sup>90</sup> or the furniture of the shops of the booksellers. These means of entertainment were so disposed, that the books of a serious character were placed near the seats assigned to the matrons, while near the benches of masters and fathers of families, such compositions were ranged as were in esteem for their latin gravity and tragic elevation; though these volumes, the productions of various writers, might all possess an equality of merit on subjects very different; for men of like intellectual rank were mingled together; here Augustin, here Varro, here Horace, here Prudentius, caught the eye of the reader. Among whom Adamantius Origenes, as interpreted by Turranius Ruffinus,<sup>91</sup> was submitted to the inspection of the serious readers professing our faith; so that the maintainers of the different opinions on this subject might discuss the grounds upon which some of our greatest divines have condemned this interpretation as a very sinister performance, and to be altogether avoided, although it was so exact a translation of each word and sentence, that neither Apulcius

<sup>90</sup> These were the *Subsellia cuneata* of the Athenæum, constructed in Rome, in imitation of the Greek Athenæum, and which was the scene of the *ludi litterarii*. It seems there is yet the name of the 'school of the Greeks' distinguishing a small space at the foot of the Aventine hill, where tradition says, St. Augustin once taught, when he exercised the rhetorical art in the Roman Athenæum. In this place also poems and orations were usually recited. Concerning the Roman Athenæum, see Lampridius in Alexandro; Capitolinus in Pertinace, et Gordiano; and Symmachus, Lib. ix. Ep. 84.

<sup>91</sup> The interpretation of Origen by Ruffinus, seems to be highly approved of by Sidonius; which is not to be wondered at, as the Christians of Gaul and of all the Western Churches were much inclined to favour Ruffinus; but Jerom, in commenting on Origen's work *περί αρχων*, shews that in Ruffinus's interpretation many things were interpolated, and many things subtracted, and he calls Ruffinus's work "*infamem eam interpretationem*."

nor Tully, had more faithfully executed, the one the Phædo of Plato, and the other the Ctesiphon of Demosthenes, as a rule and model for Roman elocution. With these studies each of us occupied himself as he pleased, until a messenger from the chief cook reminded us that it was time to think of taking care of our corporeal part: which messenger, marking the time by the Clepsydra, came very punctually at the fifth hour.<sup>92</sup>

Dinner was soon dispatched, after the senatorian custom, according to which a copious repast is served up in few dishes, although the banquet consisted both of roast and boiled. Little stories were told while we were taking our wine, which conveyed delight or instruction, as they happened to be dictated by experience or gaiety. We were decorously, elegantly, and abundantly entertained. Rising from table, if we were at the Villa called Voroangum, we retired to our apartments to get our necessaries from our packages. If we were at Prusianum, the other Villa, we turned out Tonantius and his brothers, some very select young men of quality, of the same standing, to make room for us and our furniture. Having shaken off our after-dinner-nap, we amused ourselves with a short ride, to get an appetite for our supper. Neither of our hosts had their baths completed for use, though each was constructing them. But after the train of servants and attendants, which I had brought with me, had a little respite from their cups, whose brains were somewhat overcome with the hospitable bowls of which they had freely partaken, a sort of pit was dug in haste near a rivulet or spring, into which a quantity of hot bricks were thrown, a circular arbor being made over it by the intertexture of the boughs of willows or hazels, by which the place was darkened, and air at the same

<sup>92</sup> Eleven o'clock according to our reckoning. The day was anciently considered as divided into twelve hours, and the night into the same number, the hours of the day being ab exortu solis ad occasum—i. e. from the rising to the setting sun, so that the hours would, for the purposes of life, vary in length. The sixth hour was always the period of noon: the fifth was therefore eleven o'clock. *Quintâ dum Linea tangitur umbrâ. Pers. Sat. iii. l. 4.*

*Sosiu, Prandendum est; quartain jam totus in horam*

*Sol calet, ad quintam flectitur umbra notam. Auson in Ephim.*

time admitted through the interspaces, while a hot vapour was sent through the willows. Here an hour or two passed in the midst of much wit and merriment, during which we were all thrown into a most salubrious perspiration, being enveloped in the steam as it came hissing from the water. When we had been suffused with this long enough, we were plunged into the hot water; and being well cleansed and refreshed, we were afterwards braced by an abundance of cold water from the river or fountain. The river Vuardus<sup>92</sup> runs between the two Villas, and except when it is thickened and discoloured by the influx from the snow on the neighboring heights, it is a transparent and gentle stream, with a pebbly bottom, nor on that account the less abounding in delicate fish. I might go on to give you a description of our suppers, which were sumptuous, did not my paper put that stop to my loquacity, which modesty does not; of which, however, I should have been much pleased to give you an account, were I not ashamed to blur over the back of my paper with my ink. Besides which, we are on the point of starting, and we please ourselves with the hope of soon seeing you again, if God permit; and then we shall best commemorate the suppers we have had with our friends, in the suppers we shall exchange with each other, only let a complete week first elapse to bring us back to our appetites, after this luxurious banqueting; for a stomach surfeited by luxurious fare, is repaired by nothing so much as by stinting it for a time.

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The letter last above produced presents an image of more ease and cheerfulness, than might have been expected to exist at a time when the Roman Empire was falling to pieces, and successive incursions of barbarous and unknown enemies were shaking to their foundation the elements of society.

<sup>92</sup> This river runs through the country of the Volcae Arecomici into the Rhone, once famous for a Roman bridge and aqueduct, of Roman structure, of which, it is said, some traces may yet be seen.

But there is a tenacity in the habits of civilized life, and an exigency in its usages and reciprocities, which sustain it in being and operation, amidst all the casualties and revolutions to which civilized communities are exposed, and thus in the last catastrophe of Rome, with Goths and Vandals, and Visi-Goths at her gates, and trampling on her provinces, we find the bishop of Arverne and his friends, at a retreat among the mountain passes, enjoying all the pleasures of the festive board, and as happy as good cheer, and hospitable friendship could make them. Sidonius seems, after all, to have been a very good-natured man, a kind friend, and a good husband. It has been affirmed, that in compliance with the prescript of the Canons, and the usages of the ancient church, he separated himself from Papianilla, as his wife, and adopted her as his sister, according to the general practice of the church under like circumstances. The same has also been said of Paulinus of Nola,—that he turned his wife into his sister, upon his ordination. This statement respecting Sidonius stands upon no good testimony, and is very unlikely to be true: and in a letter of Augustin addressed to Paulinus and Therasia his wife, their conjugal union is alluded to in terms of great praise and congratulation.<sup>94</sup> Synesius, we have seen, resolutely resisted such a shameful interdict, and the miserable and wicked subterfuge by which it was attempted to be compensated. And although both the prohibition, and the fraudulent evasion may have been occasionally practised in the primitive church, it was reserved for the discipline of a still darker age, and a fouler superstition to include, and give permanence to, so gross a regulation amongst its other tyrannical devices.

Our review of ancient epistolary correspondence seems fitly to close with that epoch of ancient history, in which the majesty of the Empire was evanescent in Augustulus, and when Sidonius Apollinaris was the only remaining assertor of the claims of the Latin muse. The scope of this undertaking necessarily brought under notice the epistles of the fathers of the church,

<sup>94</sup> See Supr. 595.

particularly of those of the fourth, and the early part of the fifth century. In this part of the work, it is hoped that no indication has been given of a want of that respect and reverence for the fathers, which their characters and services claim at our hands. There were many of them excellent and holy men, and of all the actors in the greatest affairs of mankind, there are none concerning whom it is more important that the truth should be spoken. We are indebted to them largely for their lessons of vital holiness, and for their general specification of the fundamental verities of an orthodox belief. But still they were very erring men, often at variance with Scripture, often at strife with each other, and often, very often, on particulars involving or affecting the mysteries of our faith, letting their fancies loose in unsober speculation. They were under considerable disadvantages, many of them being late converts to Christianity, and not becoming such, till their minds had been deeply impregnated with the Gentile philosophy, which they had not only learned, but officially taught in the schools of Athens, Antioch, Rome, and Alexandria.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> The question as to what epoch of ecclesiastical history we are to look, for the best instruction in Christian Theology, has been very differently viewed; some sending us to what is called the first and purest ages of the Church, as nearest to the times of the Apostles, on the ground that the Primitive Christians had better means of knowing the minds of the inspired teachers, than could be supplied by the greatest industry and learning, at periods more distant from the primary sources. There may be some justness in this reasoning, and we may add to this side of the balance, the further consideration, that it is on the credit and testimony of those early Vouchers, that the authority of the Scripture-Canon itself does greatly depend. It is, moreover, to the practice and opinions of these primitive Teachers, that we are to go for the settlement of many of our doubts respecting the writings and institutions of the Holy Apostles. The miraculous and extraordinary aid vouchsafed to the infancy of the Church, for supporting it in its first struggles, and for sustaining its uncollected strength, and its deficiency of stated methods of instruction, appear to have been withdrawn, perhaps gradually, as its ordinary helps increased in number and efficiency. In the fourth and fifth centuries their room was filled to overflowing by the spurious progeny of a teeming superstition, and unscrupulous habit of invention. That judaizing practice which we have seen so much in debate between Jerom and Augustin, in their animated correspondence, continued much longer in the Church than the latter seemed to consider probable :



Happy it is for us that with the scriptures of truth lying before us, we are not cast in single dependance, on the vague authority of human dictation, for the grounds of our hope and trust. Hardly had the day of the full effusion of the spirit passed away, before the mystery of iniquity began its work, and tares were sown among the wheat. It was a corrupt medium of much heresy and error, but still it was the medium of one glorious, one certain tradition, the tradition of the Bible itself, handed down and confirmed through a series of unbroken attestation. Fallible and feeble hands, unauthorised and unqualified to add a syllable to the contents of the record, or to interpret those contents with certainty, or to furnish an article of belief which those contents did not comprise and promulgate, were yet capable of preserving and transmitting the record itself. And for this tangible subject of tradition, we have greatly to thank them.

In the fourth century, Christianity being then established,

and after its 'honourable interment' left an impression, of no favourable effect, in the fables and traditions to which it gave birth. To these succeeded an impure mixture of Gentile philosophy, which brought with it many taints that corrupted the stream of interpretation, and doctrinal teaching. It furthermore introduced a profusion of mystical and allegorical fictions and puerilities, in dispensing which, it would have been well if the same reserve had been exercised, which has been unduly applied to the divine verities of Revelation.

Of this practice of reserve I shall venture to add, that, as far as it characterized the teaching of the early Church, it may be considered as imported from Pagan usage, and adopted as a justifiable policy in the initiatory instructions given to Catechumens. The reserve of the Pagan philosophers consisted in confining the privilege of initiation unto the recondite doctrines of their theology, to such only as had been prepared by a long probationary course of discipline. The knowledge, such as it was, to be imparted to the disciples of Pythagoras, was never to be dispensed beyond the bounds of their College; whereas the Great Founder of our faith "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."\*

We have no ground for saying that the Apostles temporized in delivering the fundamentals of the Christian faith. If they proceeded by steps in conveying instruction to their Catechumens, teaching first what was easiest to be comprehended, we cannot doubt but that among the *first* points of their in-

\* 1 Tim. ii. 4.

had the disadvantage of being brought into too near a connexion with the remains of pagan pomp and its sensual appendages, and thus the simplicity and purity both of Christian doctrine and life, rapidly declined from the apostolic standard. In the middle, and towards the end of the fifth century, we may discern instances enough of the great laxity that had begun to prevail in the discipline of the church. Sidonius was a bishop as well as Basil, but compare the letters of Basil and Gregory in a former part of this volume, written in their mountain solitudes, with the baths and chambers of the Avitacum of Arverne: and observe the facility with which Avitus himself was translated from a throne to a bishoprick. That through such æras of darkness and ignorance, any streams of Christian discipline or doctrine should have run continuous and pure, is the boon of a most merciful Providence; and with a succession of sacerdotal orders transmitted in our national church by sacred ceremonies and institutions, the humble

struction were comprized those vital and essential truths, without which Christianity would not have been the real subject of their teaching, but some other Gospel. On the subject of the Divinity of Christ, Dr. Horsley has well explained the remarks of St. Chrysostom in his first Homily on the Epistle to the Hebrews, and has shewed to what subject of instruction those remarks were applicable. See his Tracts in controversy with Priestley, Part 2. Ch. 1.

Something has appeared in a former part of this Volume, on the degree of allowance, and even credit, given to a certain policy of dissimulation practised by the ecclesiastical writers of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, under the name of *oικονομία* or dispensatio; and although this practice seems to have been principally, if not wholly, confined to the instruction of their Heathen Catechumens, before their conversion was sealed and completed by the rite of baptism; yet even to this extent it will appear to a mind in a rectified Christian state, as nothing less than a timid and dishonest procedure. It was asking men to become nominal converts, in ignorance of that to which they were to be converted; to receive Christianity apart from its essentials; and to profess a creed without knowing what they were to believe. It was a deceptious and mendacious proceeding, though it came short of the disingenuousness of preaching to the baptized a mutilated Gospel. That it is due to the fathers in general to say that they did not carry their reserve to so dishonest and unwarrantable an extent, appears in the distinction taken between the two cases in the valuable exposition of doctrine and practice, contained in the Catechetical discourses of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem.

Christians of our own country may surely be at ease, without the assurance of any personal conveyance by the imposition of hands of a mystical unction flowing in an uninterrupted channel from the fountain of original appointment. He may be at his ease also, without resting his assurance of the fundamental doctrines of his creed on the general agreement of the fathers, or early divines of the church. If such agreement can only have its proper point of union in the written word of God, why not go thither at once, taking these holy men with us as our assistants, and using them in subservience to the Bible? but in doing this, the cautious Christian will lean with a reasonable distrust on human aid. It is the jewel he wants, and not the casket, however adorned with emblems and devices, by the hand of the "cunning workman."

It is regretted that the limits of this work have not allowed a larger exhibition of the letters of the ancient fathers of the church, as it is chiefly in their correspondence that their genuine opinions are found. They contain much spiritual wisdom and many excellent rules for the guidance of moral conduct; and if some of them are a little defective in the stress laid on that sentence of wrath, under which humanity lies prostrate; and on pardoning grace and justification through the blood alone of the Redeemer; if too much of the leaven of the schools has found its way into them; and if there might have been correcter and fuller statements of the destitution of the natural man, and of the moral desolation of a criminal world; they nevertheless bear honourable testimony to the piety and faithfulness of their authors, and are among our most valuable repositories of doctrine and disquisition.

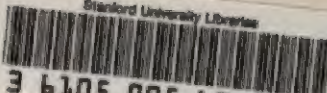
But the ground of ecclesiastical history is to be trodden with great caution and moderation. All tampering with the sacred scriptures; all limitations imposed on their completeness; all attempted supplements to their plenary comprehensiveness; all postponement of their fundamental doctrines; all distrust of their supernatural efficacy; all reliance upon human authority, beyond its proper province of discipline, order, illustration, and exercise; will be sure to lead to a

wrong use of the valuable writings of those holy men, whom, with filial respect, we call our fathers, and who, while they are proved by their works to have been very fallible men, have nevertheless established by those works their title to our grateful homage, and a consecrated place in our bosoms.

FINIS.



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